the weekly Standard

MARCH 4, 1996 $2.95

WE LOSE?

★★★★★

The Buchanan Challenge and the Future of Conservatism

★We may yet have cause to be grateful to Patrick J. Buchanan, for his success poses the most important political challenge of the year for Republicans. How the other serious Republican candidates, Robert Dole and Lamar Alexander, respond in the next few weeks to that challenge will demonstrate whether they deserve the presidency — and whether either of them can defeat Bill Clinton.

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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 24 • MARCH 4, 1996

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), Vol. 1, Number 24, March 4, 1996. Published 50 times annually by News America Publishing Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10036. Application to mail at Second-class postage is pending at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Send subscription orders to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153. Yearly subscriptions, $79.96; Canadian, $99.96; foreign postage extra. Cover price, $2.95 ($3.50 Canadian). Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Subscribers: Please send all remittances, address changes, and subscription inquiries to: The Weekly Standard, Customer Service, P.O. Box 710, Radnor, PA 19088-0710. If possible include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. For subscription customer service, call 1-800-983-7600. Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Weekly Standard Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is (202) 293-4900. Advertising Production: call Natalie Harwood, (610) 293-8540. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 930, Radnor, PA 19088-0930.

Little Brown Jug-Eared

The key to a sane result in the November elections may be some combination of CNN's Larry King, Ted Turner, and Time Warner honcho Gerald Levin. For if they don't satisfy Ross Perot's perpetual hunger for attention, he might be obliged to throw his hat in the presidential ring.

Larry King is complaining privately that Perot has been badgering him about making appearances on *Larry King Live*—where, you will recall, Perot first made clear his intention to run for president in 1992. Perot has been calling King, looking for a guest-hosting slot, or to be interviewed, or whatever. If Perot can be satisfied in this way, there could be no more civic-minded task for Larry King and his bosses—Turner and Time Warner, which is about to merge with Turner's company—than to give Perot some airtime.

What the hey, give him his own show, and call it *Can I Finish?* It couldn't possibly be any worse than *Burden of Proof* or *Talk Back Live*, and it would save some voters from making the mistake of casting their ballots for the guy come November.

Interesting detail about that, incidentally. It has long been assumed that if Perot runs in 1996, he will draw the preponderance of his voters from the Republican party and help Clinton. Early polling suggests that, right now, he would draw equally from Clinton and the Republicans—a fact that ought to be worrisome to the White House, because Clinton needs to improve his vote tally over 1992 in any case, and can't afford to lose any voters to anybody.

Hey! We Won the Lotto!

You Think Forbes Was Negative?

The recent passing of former California governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown brought back a flood of political memories. Journalist David S. Broder hailed him as "one of the true blithe spirits of 20th-century politics," "a visionary," and "the most amiable of companions." Remarked a former Brown press secretary, "It used to drive me crazy that Pat had no mean streak."

Forgotten in all the gush was the fact that Brown ran one of the most despicable television ads in history—against Ronald Reagan, in the 1966 gubernatorial race. The ad carried the title "Man versus Actor" and concluded with Brown's admonishing a group of black schoolchildren, "Remember: It was an actor who shot Lincoln." Today, we might refer to this as "hate speech."

Reagan responded as only Reagan could: "Oh," he said, "Pat wouldn't say anything like that." Talk about a blithe spirit.

Martin Luther King Has a Dream

Bob Dole seems inarticulate. But entertain the possibility for a moment that he is actually pioneering a new form of eloquence. Imagine if the great orators of history had used the Dole style: the choppy delivery, the random word associations, the tendency to speak about oneself in the third person. Listeners at the Virginia House of Burgesses would have heard, "Patrick Henry regrets it; only got one life to give for his country." Or from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial: "Martin Luther King has a dream. Promised land. Gonna get there. Got the votes." And in ancient Rome: "Julius Caesar came. Julius Caesar saw. Saw quite a bit. Saw combat in Italy. Hate to bring it up, hate to talk about it. Saw real spears flying. Conquered though. Julius Caesar conquered. Got my dog, Emperor. Nice dog."

Okay, maybe Dole is just inarticulate.

Scrapbook

The Reading List

By an overwhelming margin, readers of The Weekly Standard have voted to keep the Reading List. The vote was 18 in favor, 3 against (though the "against" ballot cast by *American Scholar* editor and noted literary critic Joseph Epstein we gave the weight of six ordinary votes; remember, this is a conservative magazine, and thus we are not necessarily believers in the "one person, one vote" principle).

Some testimonials:

"Please, please keep the Reading List. I really, really like it," writes Edward Berenson of El Sobriente, Calif. "In this day of computers, internets and heaven knows what else, we old-timers need all the reviews, lists, commentaries, anything that we can find."

"I have to admit I do read the 'List' and enjoy most of the subjects," says R.D. Bush of Columbia, Md. "It might be interesting in light of P.J. O'Rourke's excellent review [of Hillary Rodham Clinton's *It Takes a Village*] to bring up all the liberal books which have appeared in the last 30 years just to show the kind of empty-headedness prevalent throughout the Left." That's easy, Mr. Bush: Charles Reich's ***The Greening of America,*** Vivian Gornick's ***The Romance of American Communism,*** Robert Coover's ***The Public Burning***, E.L. Doctorow's ***Ragtime*** and ***Loon Lake*** and just about anything else, Alice Walker's ***The Temple of My Familiar***, Robert Pirsig's ***Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance***. . . .The list could go on forever, and will.

"Your Reading List was both interesting and challenging because the books were actually valuable to read or at least know about," offers Glenn Koocher of Cambridge, Mass. He does say, as did most people, that he had grown tired of the "find the deliberate error" contest, so we'll retire that and allow you instead to keep harping on our inadvertent illiteracies and inaccuracies.

Some readers did like the idea of some alternating lists. John Bailey of Flower Mound, Tex., proposes 12 ideas, among them a "Weekly Scoreboard" of races and elections nationwide and "Conservative Joke of the Week." (A rabbi, a Mexican, and Pat Buchanan were in a lifeboat . . .)

Michelle Puhr of Westminster, Colo., suggests an Entertainment List—"you could review films, books, CDs, television shows, and the like, and provide recommendations. . . . Be sure to keep it current and hip. A review of Perry Como's greatest hits should be balanced with a review of Coolio's latest CD, *Matlock* balanced with *Friends*, and so on." Actually, we're waiting for that collaboration between 101 Strings and the Artist Formerly Known as Prince (and Currently Known as a Jerk).

And for this week, we take our Reading List from Lawrence Dugan of Philadelphia, who offers "postwar American religious novels." He suggests three; we are paring it down to two because we don't like his first suggestion (it's from J.D. Salinger). Writes Dugan:

"***The Violent Bear It Away***, by Flannery O'Connor. What happens when a Southern boy pushes reformation fundamentalism to its literal conclusion.

"***The Moviegoer,*** by Walker Percy. Like O'Connor, Percy was a Southern Catholic who turned what seems like a parochial, isolated background into the basis for universal tales. This one is about a New Orleans society boy-stock broker addicted to benign girl-chasing and film noir when he should be reading Kierkegaard."

As should we all! ***Fear and Trembling*** and ***The Sickness Unto Death,*** anyone?

Casual

Reclaiming Your Inner Journalist

I've always been told one can never have too many friends, which perhaps was what drew me to the Learning Annex's Inner Child Workshop. Their ad promised not only to put me in touch with my inner child, but "to heal this child and thus make him/her one's own best friend."

An avid churchgoer in the conventional sense, I'm chronically fascinated by those who worship at the Temple of Self, larding up bestseller lists with M. Scott Peck and Marianne Williamson and Deepak Chopra, looking at the world through Gestalt-colored glasses and slogging through bogs of New Age goo.

Any doubt that I'd come to the right place was quashed by facilitator Jolen Chang, who welcomed six grown men and women with the words "Oh, here are the children," as she unloaded her pediatric healing utensils: a tubful of crayons, scissors, Elmers School-Girl Gel, ceramic nurturing sculptures.

Chang is a Unity lay minister. The Unity Church has served, historically, as a home for lapsed everythings: Jews fleeing orthodoxy, Catholics avoiding ritualism, Baptists who fear excessive potlucking, Episcopalians escaping each other. All were now searching for a custom-made Lincoln Log religion featuring the most beloved deity—Themselves.

One of my new foufy-haired friends explained it thus: "You, in a sense, are the Christ." This is precisely the kind of dialogue cue that can make a guy turn on his microrecorder, which I did. It was a big mistake.

"I think taping is wholly inappropriate," clucked an assertiveness trainer who'd joined us from down the hall. "I'm very uncomfortable with it" said Reva, sitting next to me. "Erase the tape. ERASE THE TAPE!!!"

"Now is it you who's uncomfortable," I needled, "or your inner child?" She didn't look amused, extending her hand in the manner of a second-grade teacher confiscating a favorite toy—one that I wouldn't see at the end of the year—as she walked it to the wastebasket, dismembering it with violent ripping motions.

Jolen scolded both me, Matt Labash, and Little Matt, as I was instructed to call my inner self. "This isn't a time for journalism, it's a time to share," she said. "Obviously some power brought you here, so leave the journalist behind."

"You can pick it up on your way out," said Lee, who looked like he'd picked up a few things himself with his blue cords and large feathered flaps of hair covering his ears like he was Andy Travis's stunt double on *WKRP in Cincinnati*.

From there we were off, with deep-breathing visualization techniques. "Picture your inner child," said Chang, holding a Cabbage-Patch likeness of herself. "Put it on your lap, stroke its hair, and say, 'Hi, Little Jolen, do you have anything to tell me today?'"

The others had more success than I. The assertiveness trainer pictured herself "in a white dress holding a fish I just caught," while Reva said, "I was in a red dress and I looked adorable." My inner snapshot occurred during a rough patch, what I refer to sartorially as my "cut-offs and dingo boots" phase—a tough look to pull off even at four.

Our trainer's intention was to connect our inner child with our nurturing parent, also referred to in the literature as a "child's rights advocate"—the Marian Wright Edelman within. Not all of us had nurturing parents, as we were reminded by hunchbacked Ben, who had the kind of 12-step facial hair that seems to retain comfort-food detritus (chicken soup driblets, Swiss Miss Mocha powder, etc.).

"My father was abusive and I never disconnected from my mother," he said. "Our relationship was"—he struggled for words—"too close." This was no revelation. If Ben had walked into the room attached to a giant nipple, none of us would've been taken aback—not as he lay on the floor in a three-quarters fetal tuck, talking baby talk while constructing origami name tags with his "non-dominant hand" and kicking off his topsiders to rub black nylon socks together like he was expecting a spoonful of Blueberry Buckle.

As a participant and not a journalist, I went with the flow—snacking on nuts and raisins while arts'n'craftsing with my playmates, observing inner child/protective parent dialogues, primal screaming into accordion room dividers, and otherwise watching the believers peel each other like Bermuda onions, savoring every narcissistic layer until they regressed to sucklings. Then, and only then, could the Big Truths come a-calling.

Though some of us know it simply as "life," Jolen told us that we all experience "dysfunction." "The important thing to remember is to have a good cry," she said. "See a sad movie, like *Babe*." That's the one with the talking pig. "I can pretty much judge everyone by how they react to that." Doesn't sound very nurturing to me.

Matt Labash

Listening to God and Being Civil

As always, P.J. O'Rourke's penetrating humor hits his target ("Mrs. Clinton's Very, Very Bad Book," Feb. 19).

I had a slightly different reaction—perhaps as a result of my Quaker background—to Mrs. Clinton's "talked with God, walked with God, ate, studied, and argued with God." The omission of the word "listened" reveals the deep arrogance of liberals in general. After all, why bother to listen when you already know all the answers?

Merry B. Quinson
Gaithersburg, MD

It's a little hard to believe that Hillary Clinton is as witless as P.J. O'Rourke makes her out to be, especially after getting coached on life's meaning by the likes of all-purpose guru Michael Lerner and Harvard guest lecturer Barbra Streisand. There must be a better explanation, and I think O'Rourke gives us a clue when he mentions the ghostwriter. What if this victim of ingratitude, aware that she would receive no credit for her labors, decided to contribute her little share to the free-fall of Mrs. Clinton's reputation by penning, as only a professional writer could, a literary travesty? That's got to be it: ghostwriter's revenge.

Admittedly, this explanation has its problems. It would require that Mrs. Clinton not only didn't write the book but didn't read it. But she does have other things on her mind these days, as we know.

Edward Ericson
Grand Rapids, MI

How ironic. Noemie Emery bemoans the loss of civility in modern politics and offers George Washington as a model for us to emulate ("What George Washington Knew," Feb. 19). In the same issue, P.J. O'Rourke provides a perfect illustration of the kind of incivility our first president would not have practiced.

One does not have to admire Hillary Clinton to be offended by the demeanor of the article. Seldom challenging her ideas, O'Rourke prefers to defame her character. Typical is his unconcealed glee at Hillary's shabby treatment by neighborhood bullies. Significantly, he ignores the fact that she eventually overcame her tormentors.

Whatever flaws mar the president and his wife, they deserve to be treated with the respect befitting the office of the president of the United States. The loss of civility and respect in American political life is shameful. Surely, it is possible to be tough with ideas while respecting the people who espouse them. Until this lesson is learned, political gridlock and chronic snippiness

will continue to polarize our nation and make "government of the people and by the people" a hopeless enterprise.

Donald Crittendon
Bloomington, IL

Congratulations to Noemie Emery for the fine article about George Washington. It is nice to see a national publication give the Father of Our Country and one of the greatest leaders of all time his just due.

Thanks to the liberal elite's Goals 2000, today kids learn more about Watergate, the Vietnam War, and the Ku Klux Klan than they do about the people and events that made this country great. To his men, General and later President Washington was a near deity. Why do we often fail to recognize such greatness and at what price?

Peter L. Loh
Dallas, TX

No Fascist Dupes Here

The criticism of Patrick Buchanan in the Scrapbook ("Every Man a Dupe," Feb. 19) and the implication that he is an extremist—a "Franco for the 90s"—are unwarranted.

Buchanan's consistency explains his popularity with social and economic conservatives. His concern for corporate and economic layoffs, the movement of jobs overseas, and the blue-collar middle class has struck such a chord that "moderate" Bob Dole has already borrowed some of Buchanan's message.

The Weekly Standard neocons would be well advised to build bridges to the paleocons. Failure to do so will assure the return to the White House of the con who presently resides there.

Thomas P. Ostrom
Rochester, MN

A Pound of Flesh

Your editorial "An Ounce of Cure" (Feb. 19) succumbs to tactical temporizing and strategic myopia.

The Kassebaum-Kennedy bill will achieve little measurable progress and may actually do some harm to overall insurance-coverage levels.

More dangerously, the bill might restore momentum to efforts to politicize health-care markets because it surrenders the principles of individual choice, personal responsibility, and risk-based pricing in favor of the slippery slope of hidden cross-subsidies, standardized benefits, and centralized decision making.

Kassebaum-Kennedy will lead to further rounds of tighter federal regulation. You cannot "guarantee" availability of insurance policies without setting price limits on them. Guarantees of renewability and portability will also increase pressure for mandatory, standardized health benefits.

If insurers cannot explicitly adjust their premiums and restrict their coverage offers to reflect different health risks posed by different people, they will resort to indirect and less efficient means to match the value of health insurance to the amount people will pay. Employers will respond by reducing or limiting the number of their employees.

The bottom line is that Kassebaum-Kennedy forces healthy people to subsi-

Correspondence

dize sick people, regardless of income. It undermines incentives to take personal responsibility for one's future health-care needs. When the purchase of health insurance is voluntary, raising the cost of insurance will raise the number of uninsured people.

TOM MILLER
WASHINGTON, DC

I disagree with your editorial on the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill. I believe the bill does violate conservative principles. First, it is an unfunded mandate on insurers, employers, and individuals. Second, in spite of its laudable intentions, it will raise the cost of health insurance, ultimately decreasing the number of persons insured. This will lead to more intrusive regulation, which might eventually result in another attempt to socialize the health-care industry.

All of the problems addressed by this bill could be corrected with a free-market solution. We should end employer-based insurance and allow individuals to buy their own health insurance with increased salaries. They should be allowed to purchase this insurance with tax-exempt dollars just as their employers do.

If they purchased high-deductible insurance in conjunction with tax-free medical savings accounts, a market for health-care services would emerge. This market would help to decrease health-care inflation and ultimately decrease the cost of health insurance.

Individual ownership, tax equity, and high-deductible health insurance coupled with tax-free medical savings accounts would increase the number of those insured, allow portability, and reduce the likelihood of preexisting-condition restrictions. This system would be conducive to deregulation and represents true conservative principles.

ROBERT T. WOODBURN
NEW BUFFALO, MI

I am baffled by your editorial conclusion that Kassebaum-Kennedy contains or does "nothing, on balance, that violates conservative principle."

The editorial states that "the bill *limits* the ability of insurance companies" to do certain things; "the legislation *guarantees access* to group plans"; it "*bans* the exclusion from [group] plans on the basis of health status alone"; and it "*requires* that paid-up insurance policies be offered for renewal" except in cases of fraud or misrepresentation (emphasis added).

I presume the editors agree, as any conservative must, that it is not the proper role of government to guarantee access to insurance, to limit the ability of business to control its operations, to ban business from choosing its customers, or to require business to offer a particular product or service.

JOHN A. FREDERICK
MANTECA, CA

LISTENING TO THE ROAR

Christina Sommers's article "Hear Them Roar" (Feb. 19) only underscores a growing belief that Gloria Steinem and company do not seek equality with men; they seek superiority. Susan Sarandon is quoted: "Men have shown us that they do not know how to be inclusive." Perhaps this is an appropriate response: "Radical feminists have shown us they will not be happy until all males are singing soprano."

ROBERT B. MCCURTAIN
WESTPORT, CT

DISCIPLINING THE DISABLED

Stuart Anderson has revealed a dangerous trend in the public education system ("Why Schools Don't Dare To Discipline the Disabled," Feb. 19). Anderson illustrates how the term "disabled" can be used by certain students with disciplinary problems to avoid taking responsibility for their actions.

For several years, I managed an employment program that helped people with disabilities find jobs. I saw lots of time and money spent to give these disabled individuals the opportunity to succeed in the labor market. Many proved to be excellent workers, and most did not want to hide behind the term "disabled."

Individuals with disabilities have special needs for physical assistance, medical care, and specialized training. But the need for special assistance has nothing to do with taking responsibility for one's actions. The same children who use the designation "disabled" as an excuse for discipline problems at school may well become adults who refuse to take responsibility for more serious behavior. Having a disability may be a reason for needing extra help. But it should never be a reason for overlooking poor or improper behavior.

GREGORY GIORDANO
NEW PORT RICHEY, FL

BLACK AND TAN FANTASY

Well, well, well. As David Tell reports, now that our country is getting a bit more diverse, our bureaucrats are looking for more "sophisticated" measures of race to use in their quota and "affirmative action" programs ("Affirmative Action and the Black and Tan Fantasy," Feb. 12). One can have little sympathy for bureaucrats caught in their own racist web. However, if our government needs help pushing "separate but equal" policies, I believe it should look to the experts.

Some South African bureaucrats have decades of experience making fine racial distinctions in mixed-race situations. These people are unemployed—we should be able to get them cheap! As for methodology and definitional exactitude, the work has already been done. The Nazis' Nuremberg Laws on "race" can give our bureaucrats a wonderful template from which to work.

Nothing better illustrates the degenerate fascism of contemporary liberalism than the fact that the aforementioned sources could be plausible (if unacknowledged) inspirations for liberalism's racial policies.

JOHN F. SUTHERLAND
ST. LOUIS, MO

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The Buchanan challenge

We may yet have cause to be grateful to Patrick J. Buchanan, for his success poses the most important political challenge of the year for Republicans. How the other serious Republican candidates, Robert Dole and Lamar Alexander, respond in the next few weeks to that challenge will demonstrate whether they deserve the presidency—and whether either of them can defeat Bill Clinton.

It will require both men to abandon hopes that a well-oiled political organization or clever gimmicks can substitute for a substantive message. They must rise above the campaigns they have run so far, and rise above their own conventional instincts. They must engage Buchanan on high ground. They must show Republican voters that they can speak to the concerns of those decent people who are tempted to pull the lever for Pat Buchanan because he is somehow speaking to and for them. And yet they also must repudiate the ideological and political morass that is Buchananism. For Buchananism is a corrosive anti-institutional populism that threatens to undo the gains of 1994 and trap the GOP in an anti-American, anti-capitalist swamp—the very swamp into which the Democratic party stumbled in the late 1960s.

BUCHANANISM IS A CORROSIVE ANTI-INSTITUTIONAL POPULISM THAT THREATENS TO TRAP THE GOP IN AN ANTI-AMERICAN, ANTI-CAPITALIST SWAMP.

What went wrong. Buchanan's reception is yet another sign that the Republican party's triumph in 1994—when it found a way to join the social conservatives with the Perot voters and come up with a unified agenda for conservative governance—has not been fulfilled to the voters' satisfaction.

Obsessed with getting the deficit under control, the party failed to emphasize the centrality of tax relief in the "Republican Revolution"—even though tax relief was the only part of the Contract with America that promised immediately to improve the lives of those who voted Republican in 1994. And when it came to the presidential race, only one candidate entered the fray with taxes in mind. That was Steve Forbes, and his early success testified to the enduring potency of the tax issue. But Forbes was, to his grief, more interested in the delightful simplicity of a single 17 percent rate than the pressing need to help relieve some of the financial burden of those American households feeling the so-called "middle-class squeeze."

Term limits failed in Congress, though that was the only part of the Contract with America that promised real change in the workings of the legislative branch. But rather than focus on this simple measure with massive public support, Lamar Alexander just kept repeating his soundbite-driven solution to the legislative woes of the United States: cutting Congress's pay and sending members home for six months out of every year. Oh? And what if President Alexander had to consider sending troops somewhere at some point during those very inconvenient six months off ?

And though everybody in Washington read the famous memo by pollster Fred Steeper indicating that the 1994 election was primarily about "social issues"—issues from abortion to crime control that really reveal the ideological fissure between the two parties—somehow they seemed to inspire a kind of ideological flight. This was most stunningly revealed in the notorious statement that probably cost Phil Gramm his candidacy: "I'm not running for preacher," he told social conservatives Gary Bauer and James Dobson, among others, even though Gramm couldn't stop himself from delivering long preachments to the American congregation on just how much ready money he had in the bank for his presidential campaign. If Gramm hadn't proved so allergic to the social issues, we might not be talking about Buchanan today.

A new Republican era that began with such amazing promise has come to this: Bill Clinton declared the

era of big government over. We won. And yet we are now in danger of losing.

Clinton's decision to accept the idea of a seven-year balanced budget was the political equivalent of shorting out the one flashlight that the leading Republican candidate, Bob Dole, had to guide him through the pitch-blackness of a presidential year full of scary debates and position papers and stirring speeches and ideology—you know, the stuff he's just not too good at. All Dole had to do, it had seemed, was point to Clinton and say, "Balanced budget," and he would take the White House. Not anymore. There's been a lot of talk that, until he was frightened by Buchanan in Iowa, Dole was already beginning to run a general-election campaign. Really? *About what*?

How Buchanan emerged. And through it all, there was Buchanan, so easy to dismiss (as most of us did)—in part because almost all his policy proposals deserved to be dismissed. His anti-immigration position got an early tryout from a more conventional candidate—Pete Wilson—who soon high-tailed it back to the governor's mansion in Sacramento. Buchanan's protectionist message was going to be a big loser in Iowa and New Hampshire, since their economies are export-driven. His isolationism did seem to have a following in the party, but nothing terrible has happened to American troops in Bosnia or Haiti, so it appeared relatively harmless. And, let's face it—he didn't have much money, and he had no organization. An intellectual brain trust so wildly conservative that its members were too right-wing for the *Washington Times*! All he had was a database and one undeniably principled position: his unambiguous, uncluttered belief that the life of the unborn is a sacred trust.

Now, without endorsing Buchanan's characterization of his supporters as "peasants," we have to confess that Buchanan understood something about a substantial part of the Republican electorate that eluded many up here in the Washington establishment "castle." He knew that they were thirsting for attention and respect. He knew they felt disenfranchised by the Republican presidential field. And he knew they were right.

Oh, sure, Bob Dole has been tight with Ralph Reed and the organizers of the Christian Coalition. He and Gramm have spotless pro-life voting records. But with the same weird faith he showed in the power of "organizing," Dole seemed to think that his seduction of the Christian Coalition leadership meant that he had their followers sewn up. Well, once again, *contra* the notorious *Washington Post* assertion in 1993, those voters proved they are not so easily led, not even by their actual leaders.

They knew the top-tier candidates *were* running away from them (in large measure, we think, because the demands of fund-raising skew a candidate's efforts toward the most moderate part of the Republican party, the sector of the GOP most hostile to the social conservatives who make up the Buchanan base). They knew that they were being dissed by a process in which the candidates who spoke in moral terms (Buchanan and Keyes) were considered *outré* for doing so.

Recent history suggests social conservatives don't demand very much. They are mostly hard-headed about the long road before them and sober about the limits of what can be accomplished through government in the near term. But they do ask that they and the issues they believe in be treated with due deference and respect. Since they live in a world in which the media treat them like monsters, they are sensitive to the slings and arrows of outside opinion. When pro-choice senatorial candidates like Paul Coverdell and Kay Bailey Hutchison came to them with outstretched arms, asking for their help and promising to consider their ideas, the social conservatives accepted and supported them.

In other words, what the social conservatives ask, to borrow from Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*, is to be *recognized*. To be told that their views are important ones, that these views can and must play a role in the larger debate. To be treated with respect. Not patronized, as Steve Forbes tried to do in Iowa. Not thrown scraps from the table, as Dole evidently intended to do by following up his triumphant Hollywood speech with . . . nothing.

And to take up the cudgel for their issues—school choice, judicial appointments, more room for religion in the public square. And, yes, abortion. They need to be engaged, as Lamar Alexander falls short of doing when he describes himself as pro-life and yet hesitates to assert that *Roe* v. *Wade* was wrongly decided and that he will appoint judges who will adhere to a strict reading of the Constitution. Such positions would be consistent with Alexander's rejection of a human-life amendment to the Constitution; and though advocating such views would make him more "moderate" on the issue of abortion than Buchanan, they would at least demonstrate that he recognizes the overriding seriousness of this central Republican concern.

The stupid economy. In addition to engaging the social conservatives, Buchanan has tapped a vein of middle-class resentment and worry whose existence no American politician could possibly be surprised to discover—except maybe Bob Dole, who professed, amazingly, that he hadn't realized the economy and jobs were going to be issues in New Hampshire. And yet there Dole and Alexander stand, without much to

say to those Americans who feel the middle-class squeeze.

Buchanan does have a lot to say on these matters, even if almost everything he says is wrong, or misleading, or deliberately demagogic. We find it impossible to believe that Republican voters really endorse Buchananite measures like punitive tariffs or the use of the tax code to "punish" companies that eliminate jobs—thus leaving it to one of those Washington bureaucrats Buchanan professes to hate so much to determine what the appropriate level of employment is at any individual company in the United States. This is not a Republican message. It's not a Democratic message. It's old-fashioned populist demagoguery, plain and simple.


Sean Delonas

To combat Buchanan on this front, Dole and Alexander need to talk to the American people like adults—to appeal to the conservatism of the head, not the "conservatism of the heart" Buchanan talks about. They need to make the point that, in macroeconomic terms, the nation is in remarkably good condition and likely to get better. Interest rates are low, and an eventual balanced budget will drive them lower and free up needed capital for research, development, and investment. We stand, for example, on the cusp of a gigantic acceleration in the world of communications, fueled in part by the passage of the so-called telecom bill deregulating a part of the economy that has labored under the government yoke for six decades. Voters need to be told that things are good, and that under Republican economic policies the big picture will only get better.

But voters don't live in the big picture, and we are in a time of economic transition. Here, too, candidates must be able to provide some relief to those who wake up at 3 a.m. in a cold sweat over bills and mortgages and student loans. Some of that relief can come from measures everybody in the race agrees on: portability of health care, medical savings accounts, and expanded IRAs.

And, of course, tax cuts. They are vital because tax cuts go to the core of what unites all Republicans: the simultaneous belief that the government is too large and that it takes too much (morally, socially, and financially) out of the hide of the American people. But where is tax relief in 1996? Lamar Alexander wants to repeal the Clinton and Bush tax increases, and yet he mentions this less often than he says, "Cut their pay and send them home." What about a full-throated public defense of the $500-per-child tax credit that is still part of the Republican budget plan? What about an increase in the personal exemption? Yes, all this would cost money. So talk about cutting more deeply into federal spending. That's what Republicans *do*.

And maybe, if Bob Dole wanted to be really daring, he might start talking about payroll-tax relief, which would require reopening the supposedly Solomonic deal that saved Social Security in 1983—a deal he can talk about reopening because he was in on it in the first place.

We don't mean to give specific advice to the candidates, only to point out that Buchanan's potential voters around the country might be convinced to look elsewhere if Dole and Alexander give them something to look *at*. Politics abhors a vacuum. Buchanan has temporarily filled it. Republicans ought to be concerned that this temporary situation may become permanent—that Buchanan in 1996 might be the Republican analogue to George McGovern in 1972.

Yes, the vision thing. Lamar Alexander is now attacking "Buchananism," while Dole talks about the "politics of hope against the politics of fear" ("hope and fear," Dole repeats immediately afterward, in case we didn't hear him the first time). Buchanan has the wrong ideas, Alexander says. He's right.

But just as Buchanan has determined that he is speaking for the "voiceless," so too must Dole and Alexander speak for the 70 percent or so of the Republican party who don't want to pull the lever for Pat Buchanan. This is a tricky game, we know, because the party needs those Buchanan voters back. That is why they need to separate Buchanan's issues from Buchanan himself.

And they must go farther. They must make the case that we are not living in Pat Buchanan's America, a place in which jobs are scarce and opportunity scarcer. A place so consumed with its own resentments that it cannot be expected to hold high the banner of freedom outside our own borders, or represent a beacon of freedom to suffering masses yearning to breathe free. Are we yet living in a country that needs a Great Wall of San Diego to save us from the Spanish-speaking hordes?

Above all, Buchanan's opponents must make the case that we don't want to live in Pat Buchanan's America. The Buchanan campaign is, in fact, the most powerful anti-American voice this country has seen in

two decades or more. It's not just the conviction that American power can do no good in the world, and shouldn't try. ("Come home, America" was, after all, George McGovern's campaign slogan.) Remember when the Left succeeded in making capitalism a dirty word? Buchanan is attempting to revive that definition. Remember the old Marxist theory that American workers were forced to buy consumer goods they did not need by hypnotic advertising that sank them into deep consumer debt similar to sharecropping? That is the hidden corollary to Buchanan's middle-class economic message—that people who have two cars and three VCRs and five telephones and a computer are worse off than they were 20 years ago, manipulated into costly consumerism by forces outside their control. And all this together adds up to the true New Left quality of Buchanan's message: that because of phenomena as various as abortion and corporate downsizing, America has become morally diseased. (Substitute "Vietnam" for "abortion" and "greedy oil companies" for "corporate downsizing" and the parallel becomes obvious.)

Shouldn't someone in this race be sticking up for the United States? Where is the patriotic indignation that helped the conservative movement find a coherent message to attack the left-liberals who were running America down? We don't believe for a moment that it has vanished in the wake of the Cold War; it awaits only a standard-bearer.

The challenge to conservatism. When Buchanan's counterpart, George McGovern, rose in 1972 to challenge liberalism from the left, he was able to do so because liberalism truly was exhausted. It could no longer fulfill its promise of a happy, secular, progressive future. Is it possible that Buchanan's rise signals a similar exhaustion in conservatism?

We are certain the answer is no. Recall that the last time there was a thoroughgoing ideological realignment—in the 1930s—it was accompanied as well by a rise in populist demagoguery. Huey Long and Father Coughlin posed the same kind of threat to the New Deal that Buchanan poses to the Republican Revolution—taking a positive desire for political change and turning it into a force for resentment.

Just as FDR and the Democrats had to beat back the populists to ensure the success and survival of the New Deal experiment, so too do today's conservatives have to find renewed political strength and intellectual vigor in the course of beating back Buchananism. This is the challenge, not just to Dole and Alexander, but to all of us. ♦

Alexander's Moment

by David Brooks

Until now, Lamar Alexander has been the Canada of politics. He's got some radical ideas—like ending the welfare state or adding another branch to the Pentagon—but everything he touches turns boring. Pat Buchanan calls on his followers to "Lock and load!" For Alexander, it would be "Chip and putt!" Buchanan screams, "Ride to the sound of the guns!" For Alexander, it would be "Drive to the sound of Zamfir on the pan flute!"

Still, even Canada gets its great moment every century or so, and the next two weeks are Alexander's time in the sun. He has about 14 days to prove that he is the real alternative to Pat Buchanan. He has to beat Bob Dole in Arizona or South Carolina, the two states in which he has enough money to be competitive. By the ides of March, Alexander will either be closing up shop or riding a tidal wave to the nomination.

On the night of the New Hampshire primary, Alexander met with William J. Bennett, guru Mike Murphy, and the rest of his campaign brass and concluded that the way to win mainstream Republican support was to beat up on Pat Buchanan more effectively than Bob Dole. Alexander came out swinging at a press conference the morning after, with a much tougher tone than he had used the night before. He went on to a successful rally in South Carolina, which drew four times as many people as expected and generated a good deal of spontaneous check writing.

The Buchanan surge solves one of the central contradictions of the Alexander campaign. Alexander has posed as an outsider, wearing those phony flannel shirts and overdoing the tinny populist rhetoric. But fighting Buchanan, he can now run as a mainstream Republican. That's a role that suits him. He's wearing dark ties. The gimmickry has been toned down. He's beginning to appear presidential.

Trashing Buchananism also keeps Alexander focused on policy substance, not political strategy. Even more than the other candidates, Alexander has too often sounded like a consultant more than a candidate. His "ABC—Alexander Beats Clinton" theme not only fails to sway voters; it distracts from his alleged vision for America. And his call for Dole to get out of

the race on primary night in New Hampshire was presumptuous and embarrassing.

Alexander is basing his post-New Hampshire strategy on the emergence of the New South, or what he calls the "progressive South." He believes there is now a majority of southern Republican voters who, far from being the Bubbas of old, welcome international investment—suburban cosmopolitans rather than isolationist peasants. If the Buchanan mob carries pitchforks and assault weapons, then Alexander is counting on a counterforce in minivans. Alexander is hitting Buchanan on protectionism foremost; as the former governor of a state he made a magnet for overseas investment, he believes he can hit from strength.

Chas Fagan

But he is not trying to scare the bejeebers out of voters. He doesn't label Buchanan extremist or intolerant, as Dole does. That's because Alexander likes Buchanan. Their friendship goes back 25 years, to when they were both working in the Nixon White House. His problem is that he still can sound like a Gerber Republican, so mainstream that he comes off predigested and bland. Alexander's mantra over the past few days has been in support of free trade and less regulation, not exactly the "fresh ideas" he brags about. Moreover, he doesn't directly address the problem that Buchanan has put at the center of the agenda—wage stagnation. People in the Alexander campaign argue that most voters aren't actually frustrated by their stagnant pay packet. Rather, they are worried about losing their jobs. The way to address those anxieties, Alexander believes, is to offer a voucher-based job-training scheme so that someone who lost a job as, say, a computer programmer could get work as something else. If you didn't just fall asleep over the words "voucher-based job-training scheme," you are exactly the sort of person Alexander wants on his fund-raising list.

Goo-goo Republicanism of this sort is Alexander's weakness. It appeals primarily to the kind of Republican businessman who wants to bring efficient management techniques to the schools or put a computer in every classroom (an Alexander project when he was secretary of education). Goo-goo Republicans are forever warning about the dangers of isolationism or protectionism, the sort of point that wins pious nods at Chamber of Commerce dinners. Similarly, bashing Buchanan is an extremely polite thing to be seen doing. It is safe, but it is not a positive agenda.

The Alexander problem the Buchanan surge hasn't solved is his utter inoffensiveness. His life seems to have been constructed to win universal admiration, rather than deep admiration from a specific group. Even in the heat of the campaign, he seems to be always thinking about how such and such a statement will play out in the media. This inoffensiveness can become offensive and explains why so many reporters are hostile to him. If he's going to discover a way to generate enthusiasm, he's probably going to have to learn at least one thing from Pat Buchanan: how to serve up raw meat. ♦

A Lesson for Dole

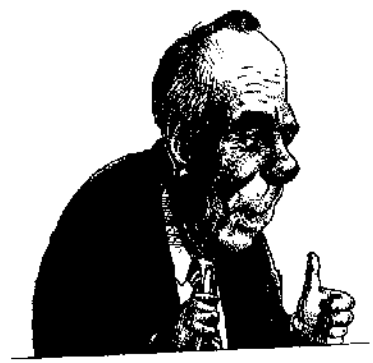
by Fred Barnes

When Washington attorney Robert Lighthizer, a former Senate aide of Bob Dole and now a senior adviser, returned from New Hampshire the day after the February 20 primary, he got an earful. On the plane, Lighthizer encountered Bay Buchanan, manager of her brother Pat's presidential campaign. She insisted Dole is making an awful mistake by attacking Pat Buchanan as an extremist. It's suicidal. Dole might win the Republican presidential nomination with that tactic, but he's jeopardizing his chances of defeating President Clinton. He's alienating both Buchanan and his followers, who constitute one quarter to one third of the GOP electorate. If Dole is the nominee—and despite losing in New Hampshire, he *is* the frontrunner—Dole will desperately need them in the fall. Later that day, Lighthizer sent a memo to Dole, urging him to stop calling Buchanan an extremist.

Good advice. And for the moment, Dole took it. But his tendency is still to demonize Buchanan, though in milder terms, rather than concentrate on combating his ideas on trade, the economy, immigration, and America's role in the world. Dole did this implicitly after dropping the "extremist" stuff. "Bob

Dole is not some kind of fringe candidate," Dole declared. "If you want a polarizer, I'm not your candidate." Well, guess who is? Dole didn't have to say. And guess who's not the candidate from "the mainstream"? And who might "take the Republican party over the cliff"? And who believes in "intolerance in America"?

Buchanan hardly deserves a free pass. Sharp criticism of his occasionally wild statements and wrongheaded policy ideas is warranted. The trick is doing it in a way that treats him and especially his followers with respect. Dole (or Lamar Alexander if he wins the nomination) must assimilate them in the Republican party, not ostracize them. Like it or not, they're now a major force and so is Buchanan, their leader. True, Buchanan isn't likely to win the nomination. But he'll have enough delegates to play a big role at the GOP convention in August. Dole and the Republican establishment can either accommodate him in the platform, the convention speeches, even in choosing a vice presidential nominee—or else. The alternative is a poisonous convention, a split in the party, and the reelection of Bill Clinton.


Sean Delonas

Holding the Buchanan brigades won't be easy. Buchanan may be the Jesse Jackson of the GOP, but his followers are not like Jesse's. The Jackson constituency is largely black, and for decades black voters have been reliable Democrats. Buchanan attracts people from outside GOP ranks: independents, Perotistas, conservative Democrats. Not only are many of them lukewarm about the Republican party, they don't resemble regular Republicans in income level, demeanor, or dress. Buchananites look like they just came from the bowling league or Pentecostal church social. They're folks for whom Dole has little appeal. So unless they (and Buchanan) are treated well, they'll abandon the Republican party in a heartbeat.

Fortunately, Lighthizer isn't the only Dole adviser who believes attacks on Buchanan as beyond the political pale are counterproductive. Conservative activists Donald Devine and David Keene have urged Dole to soften his rhetoric. Some Dole campaign staffers agree. Media consultant Don Sipple suggested that the Dole TV ad in New Hampshire zinging Buchanan as an extremist was unhelpful and would not be repeated. "Been there, done that," Sipple said. Dole himself seemed uncomfortable with the effort to isolate Buchanan. When Buchanan confronted him about the TV spot in a New Hampshire debate on February 15, Dole became defensive and never fully recovered. He skipped the next televised debate in Tempe, Arizona, a week later.

The TV ad was aired after Dole narrowly topped Buchanan in the Iowa caucuses on February 12. It cited two items from Buchanan's old newspaper column and concluded: "He's too extreme and he can't beat Bill Clinton." The Dole campaign dropped the ad after two days, but Dole revived the theme the morning after the New Hampshire primary. "This now is a race between the mainstream and the extreme," Dole said. "I'm the mainstream conservative. I know [Buchanan] appeals to the fears in people, he plays on the fears of people. I want to appeal to their hopes." This infuriated Buchanan. He said "his movement and his people" will find it difficult to back any "name-caller" like Dole. Calling a conservative an extremist also "drives every conservative activist up the wall," says Jeffrey Bell, a Republican strategist who's friendly with the Dole campaign.

The tactic isn't new. President Gerald Ford used it against Ronald Reagan in 1976, with dire results. "Governor Reagan couldn't start a war," a Ford ad blared. "President Reagan can." Ford also accused Reagan of wanting to dismantle Social Security. In the short run, the tactic worked; Ford won the nomination. But he alienated Reagan, who refused to be considered as Ford's running mate. (Reagan said, however, that Dole was acceptable, and Dole was selected.) Worse, Reagan did little to keep the newcomers he'd attracted in the Republican fold. He campaigned only sparingly for Ford in the fall. "There were a lot of hard feelings," recalls Bell, a Reagan staffer in 1976.

Like Jackson, Buchanan makes normal civilities difficult. His anti-establishment rhetoric is often sweeping. It's one thing to criticize his presidential rivals. It's another to dismiss the entire Republican Congress as a tool of Fortune 500 corporations and K Street lobbyists. Yet that is Buchanan's line, one he espoused again in the Arizona debate. It puts him at odds with virtually the whole Republican party.

It doesn't mean he's bound to bolt if he doesn't get the nomination. Jackson didn't in 1984. Walter Mondale made sure of that. After losing the New Hampshire primary to Gary Hart, Mondale called Hart and sought to keep their disagreements within bounds. And he sent his campaign manager, Bob Beckel, to confer endlessly with Jackson. Mondale had to make concessions on the platform and give Jackson a prime-time spot for a convention speech. But all that worked. The Democratic party remained unified. Sure, Mondale lost in a landslide to Reagan, but that was for other reasons. There's a lesson for Bob Dole in the Mondale approach. He'd better heed it. ♦

Jews for Buchanan

by Tucker Carlson

"Hope you're not the fearful type," says Yehuda Levin, Orthodox Jewish rabbi and national co-chair of the Buchanan for president campaign, as he maneuvers his aging aqua Oldsmobile through the streets of the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. "The wipers are on the blink and it's kind of hard to see." In fact, it is impossible to see, a mixture of rain and fog having turned the wiper-less windshield as opaque as a shower curtain. But Levin drives on oblivious, ignoring the fuzzy shapes that loom just beyond the hood as he recalls the day he first took an interest in politics.

It was 1978, and Levin was a 24-year-old rabbinical student in New York. A hearing was being held at City Hall on impending gay rights legislation. Almost on a lark, Levin decided to go. He still sounds shocked as he remembers the event. "I saw these very strange-looking people, dressed very, very crazy," says Levin, who is wearing a fedora, a black suit, and tennis shoes. "They were militant and shouting and raucous. I thought, 'What the H is going on here?' I had never seen anything like this. It was my introduction to the culture wars."

Today, Levin is a grizzled veteran of those wars. After years of fighting for conservative social values, he is waging his latest battle on behalf of Patrick Buchanan. Or perhaps more accurately, he is being used by Patrick Buchanan to wage a battle—to distance Buchanan from the allegations of anti-Semitism that have dogged him since at least the late 1970s. Yehuda Levin, with his clearly identifiable religious title, makes a handy comeback to detractors, living proof that the Buchanan campaign is mainstream and bigot-free. "Oh, for heaven's sakes," replied the candidate last month when asked by a New Hampshire radio station if he harbored bias against Jews. "We've got rabbis on the board of our campaign." Actually, Yehuda Levin is the only one. But the Buchanan campaign is hoping he'll be enough.

If Buchanan himself dismisses questions about anti-Semitism as ridiculous, Yehuda Levin offers a more elaborate defense. "Liberal Jews," he says, "have done a significant job demonizing Buchanan and scaring people by getting half-quotations of what Buchanan has said, or taking things out of context, or not presenting Buchanan in the environment in which he must be understood." That environment, says Levin, is journalism. As a writer, Buchanan makes his points in a "brisk, provocative, highly quotable way. He is going to say things to get the most bang for his buck. So he'll make a comment about [Israel's] 'amen corner'—something," Levin says, "that's widely known in Washington" anyway.

Coupled with the fact that "it doesn't take much these days for the Anti-Defamation League to see anti-Semitism hiding behind every bush," Levin says, it's no wonder his political enemies have tried to tar Buchanan with charges of bigotry. "You will unfortunately have a liberal segment of my co-religionists that will already be frightened of this person—as a matter of fact, they're probably very frightened of Yehuda Levin."

No doubt they are. Levin has spent much of his time over the last 15 years agitating on behalf of the social causes that give liberals of any religion nightmares. As proof, he produces a manila envelope stuffed with newspaper stories that mention his name. Each clipping has been lovingly laminated; many go back to the early 1980s. Levin has at various times led anti-abortion rallies, worked for tougher pornography laws, and protested against the North American Man-Boy Love Association. In 1984, he became a Republican and ran against Steven Solarz for Congress. He did surprisingly well, winning 35 percent of the vote, as well as an endorsement from onetime syndicated columnist Joseph Sobran (the subject of complaints more serious than those against Buchanan that he peddles anti-Semitism). Levin says the campaign helped to show the rest of America that "not every Jew is some guy who's a card-carrying member of the ACLU, who's taking God out of the public schools, who's promoting abortion, who's standing in the vanguard of the homosexual rights movement."

Buoyed by his relative success, Levin challenged Ed Koch in the mayor's race a year later. Levin ran on the Right-to-Life ticket and to nobody's surprise didn't do very well—though he did succeed in driving the incumbent crazy, calling him, among other things, a "homosexualist." At one point Levin, who for years made something of a hobby out of heckling local officials at political events, lectured Koch to his face. "As a Jew, you're an embarrassment, you're a disgrace, you're a step away from excommunication," he says he shouted at Koch.

Levin's political activities apparently didn't leave much time for anything else. Though he is an ordained rabbi, he last had his own congregation six years ago. It is not exactly clear what he has been doing since. For a while, he hosted a Jewish-oriented radio show on a local station. The Buchanan campaign lists Levin's current occupation as the president of Jews for Morality, a group that Levin has claimed has

10,000 members. Pressed, he describes himself merely as a spokesman for the organization, which he admits doesn't exist in any formal sense—no charter, no tax-exempt status, no physical headquarters. "Jews for Morality is a grassroots organization in the fullest sense of the word," he explains. Levin, who is married and has eight children, says he now works for Get Free, an organization that helps Orthodox women obtain religious divorces from their husbands. He isn't clear about whether or not he gets paid for the job.

Levin's latest political involvement seems every bit as hard to pin down as his employment. Asked what it means to be national co-chair of the Buchanan campaign, Levin replies, "Your guess is as good as mine." He admits he doesn't campaign or raise money for the candidate. "I'm not going to put out a poster on my car that says 'Vote for Buchanan,'" he says. He appears to have met Buchanan himself only briefly at a few political events and has not seen or heard from the candidate since they both appeared at a sparsely attended press conference last summer to announce Levin's appointment as co-chair. In fact, Levin has had virtually no contact with the campaign at all, apart from a sprinkling of phone conversations with Buchanan's sister Bay and various of her assistants. As of last week, however, Levin's name was still listed on the campaign's stationery. Unfortunately, it was misspelled.

Levin clearly is baffled by the inattention he has received. "My message to the Buchanan people is this: 'Call me when you want me, and I'll be there.'" So far, they haven't called. The distance seems to be by design. "I think their attitude is avoid [all things Jewish] as much as possible," Levin says. "They're not interested in coming out to New York and meeting with Jews and rabbis. They haven't been interested in doing interviews with Jewish media, even things that I've tried to broker for them and could assure them they'd get a fair shake."

On the other hand, Levin himself doesn't really seem that enthusiastic about Buchanan. He doesn't advertise his involvement with the campaign, and few of his friends and neighbors seem to know about it—although, he says, "it's coming out now much more than before," since his involvement has been "uncovered" by a local Jewish newspaper.

Those who do know don't seem impressed. Levin says that "philosophically" many of the Orthodox in Brooklyn support Buchanan. It's hard to know exactly what Levin means by this, although it soon becomes clear that "philosophically" supporting a candidate is not the same as plain supporting him. Or even liking him. At a deli in Boro Park, a heavily Orthodox section of Brooklyn, a Hasid in a beaver-skin hat overhears Levin talking about the campaign and approaches the table. His ear-locks swing as he angrily denounces Buchanan as a bigot, a hater whose rise should be frightening to Jews everywhere. Levin does not put up a defense. Instead, he looks embarrassed.

Even Levin's wife seems to have strong reservations about Buchanan. The daughter of Auschwitz survivors, she finds his position as Buchanan's co-chair "a little hard to deal with," Levin says. "People do not understand. I do pay a price for that."

Similar reactions have kept other Jewish Buchanan supporters—and there are some—equally mum about their positions. One well-known New York rabbi speaks at length and eloquently in defense of Buchanan. Far from being an anti-Semite, says the rabbi, Buchanan is more like a victim—of liberal Jews "afraid of a Gentile who asserts his religious, racial, or cultural identity too clearly." Buchanan, he says, "has the courage to maintain principles that every American felt were absolutely normal prior to World War II." Of course the rabbi doesn't say such things in public. If the news came out about his support for Buchanan, he confides in low tones, "I'd lose my job." Another prominent rabbi, a school principal from the Midwest, even plans to be a Buchanan delegate. He, too, is doing his best to keep his support secret.

Even the Buchanan camp itself seems strangely uncomfortable about the question of Jewish support for the campaign. Asked for a list of prominent Jews who back Buchanan, deputy press secretary K.B. Forbes switches immediately to debatespeak. "We don't break it down," he says. "We don't have quotas here." He does, however, suggest that anyone looking to understand the depth of Buchanan's appeal in the Jewish community contact conservative movie critic Michael Medved. Medved, says Forbes, "is good friends with Pat. He spoke at Pat's American Cause dinner. Call him up—he's Orthodox Jew, too."

Reached at his house in Los Angeles, Medved hardly comes off as a Buchanan booster. "I'm sorry they're giving out my name," says Medved, who concedes he has had dinner with Buchanan and found him charming enough. "I don't think he's Hitler, but I certainly wouldn't vote for him for president."

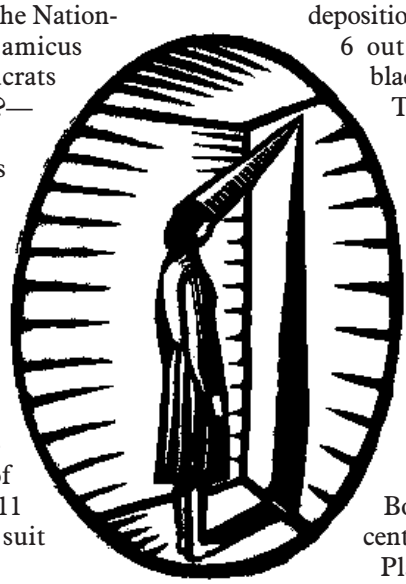
Back in Brooklyn, Yehuda Levin clearly is becoming ambivalent about the campaign. How, for instance, does he feel now that his candidate has broken from the pack, confounding pundits by beating Bob Dole in the New Hampshire primary? Levin doesn't own a television, nor does he bring non-Jewish newspapers into his house, so he first heard the news from New Hampshire while listening to the radio. His reaction seems curiously free of elation. "Frankly, I still think he's a long shot," Levin says, pausing. "Maybe I'm not supposed to say that as a chair of the campaign." ♦

Those Who Can't, Sue

by Debra J. Saunders

TODAY'S LESSON, BROUGHT TO YOU by the California Teachers Association: When you flunk a test, sue.

Thirteen years ago, California implemented the California Basic Education Skills Test, or CBEST, with the modest goal of insuring that new teachers have attained at least a 10th-grade level in reading, writing, and math. This year hearings are being held in a three-year effort to gut the test. In 1992, the Oakland Alliance of Black Educators, the Association of Mexican-American Educators, and the California Association for Asian-Pacific Bilingual Education filed a class-action suit against the test. In 1993, the California Teachers Association (CTA)—arguably the state's largest lobbying entity, affiliated with the National Education Association—filed an amicus brief in support of the suit. The educrats contend that the test is—what else?—racist.



As proof, the suit offers pass ratios by ethnic grouping. Only 35 percent of African Americans, 51 percent of Latinos, and 59 percent of Asians—but 80 percent of white test-takers—passed the test the first time. Not mentioned in the suit is the fact that, when those who take the test two or more times are included, 63 percent of blacks, 86 percent of Latinos, 84 percent of Asians, and 96 percent of whites pass. Indeed, six of the original 11 individual plaintiffs named in the suit have passed CBEST since 1992.

This is not a difficult test. The writing section requires applicants to write two brief essays. The reading section features multiple-choice questions to assess comprehension of a few short essays. A sample math question: Sari ran for club president and received 70 percent of the vote. His opponent garnered 21 votes. How many people voted? The answer is multiple choice. Another question asks, "Of the following fractions, which is closest in value to 0.35—3/5, 1/2, 1/5, 1/4 or 1/3?"

Patricia Wheeler, who helped write the test, testified in court that she gave 80 sample math questions to her 8-year-old son. He got only two wrong. (They found typos in two others.) Since then, the state has responded to pressure from teacher groups by making the math section even easier, eliminating questions involving elementary geometry and algebra.

Nonetheless, the suit argues that the information in the test—especially the math portion—may be irrelevant to a classroom teacher, a school counselor (who must figure grade point averages), or an administrator (whose job involves budgeting). The suit argues that even an award-winning teacher of a subject covered on the test can fail it—a sign of the test's weakness, the suit claims, not of any shortcoming in the system.

The suit's star plaintiff is Sara Boyd, an African-American former teacher and guidance counselor now retired from her job as vice principal of Menlo-Atherton High School. The suit cites Boyd's many awards and accolades as proof that she is a solid educator as well as "an extra-sensitive conduit and role model for the school's large minority student population."

Even attorney Lawrence Ashe, who is defending the test, was surprised by an exchange in a videotaped deposition with Boyd. She had mentioned that 6 out of 80 teachers at her school were black—1 or 2 percent by her estimation. Then she realized that 8 teachers were black.

"So, in fact, 10 percent of the faculty is African American?" Ashe responded.

"No," Boyd countered.

"What percent of 80 is 8?" Ashe asked Boyd.

For 40 seconds—I timed it—Boyd was silent. Then: "Can you rephrase that? I'm drawing a blank here."

The question was rephrased and Boyd answered "That's about 1 percent."

Plaintiffs' attorney John Affeldt has maintained that Boyd is competent and that for years she ably computed grade point averages as a guidance counselor. He dismissed Boyd's wrong answer as deposition nervousness. But she flunked CBEST four times—earning the equivalent of 0 in math twice. "A lot of math anxiety," Affeldt explained.

Boyd also must suffer from reading anxiety, because she flunked the reading section all four times as well. Some other plaintiffs took and failed the test six or more times.

Ashe argues that many Latinos and Asians have flunked the reading portion because, while they claim to be bilingual or multilingual, they have not mastered English. Linda James, a principal who is president of the Oakland Alliance of Black Educators, seems to agree—if unintentionally—with that contention. James explained that some bilingual teachers flunk the

Illustration by Kevin Chadwick

reading test because, she told the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "When you are a person who has difficulty with the English language, it's going to take you a little longer to figure it out."

It should be noted that while the teachers union et al. fault CBEST for keeping good teachers out of the classroom, many educators, including named plaintiffs, received state waivers that allowed them to become first-time public-school teachers or be promoted into administration. Boyd already was a teacher when CBEST was implemented, so she didn't need to pass it to teach. She did need to pass CBEST, however, to become an administrator. In the suit she cried racism—yet the state granted her waivers that allowed her, despite her having flunked the test four times, to be a vice principal from 1989 until her retirement in 1995.

This suit doesn't do much for minority teachers' rep—or, considering the CTA's position that 10th-grade mastery isn't needed to teach well, the reputation of California teachers generally. Talk about living down to your stereotype as whiners.

Meanwhile, note the obnoxious claim that CBEST deprives minority students of minority teachers who would make splendid role models. These are needed role models? Teachers who sue on the ground that minorities can't be expected to perform as well as whites? Teachers who demonstrate that if you fail, the remedy is to cry racism? Educators who believe that the key to success is lowering standards?

To the contrary, the role models are the majority of teachers who take the test and pass, if not the first time, then later. The real outrage, the real racism, is in a system that graduates kids who can't read, write, or add. What these minority-educator groups ought to be outraged about is the fact that so many blacks, Latinos, and Asians managed to graduate from high school, complete four years of college and a fifth year of teacher training, and still fail to read, write, and compute as well as a 10th-grader. That's what they should try to change.

Instead they propose to increase minority student achievement by sticking minority students with incompetent teachers. That's how little they care about black, Hispanic, and Asian kids.

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Jailhouse Work

by Andrew Peyton Thomas

Few aspects of the nation's criminal justice system seem more nonsensical to the average person than the fact that incarcerated criminals do no work. With more than one million offenders behind bars—the vast majority of them young men in their prime work years—America asks its prison inmates to provide no goods or services for the society that supports them. Instead of contributing to their upkeep through meaningful labor, and learning self-discipline in the process, prisoners devote their time to appealing their convictions, roughing up fellow inmates, planning their next offenses, and more or less relaxing at taxpayers' expense.

An estimated 90 percent of America's prisoners are unemployed, although the merits of prison labor are well established. A 1991 study by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons found that employed inmates are half as likely to commit crimes once released as unemployed inmates. Employed inmates are also more likely to find work after their release and to find better-paying jobs.

Nevertheless, the federal government has essentially outlawed prison labor. As the Senate continues to mull over the 1996 crime bill, its members should move to repeal the handful of antiquated federal statutes that have had this effect. In addition to doing the country a major service, this would provide a winning issue for Republicans, who must answer to a public still concerned about crime and rightly upset over the current system of inmate idleness.

Prison labor was effectively eliminated by federal statute 50 years ago at the behest of organized labor. Before then, the United States had a robust history of employing prisoners for menial farming and factory tasks. Early Americans supported prison labor because it provided operating revenue for prisons and because they thought it encouraged offenders' spiritual reformation. Work, it was believed, eliminated opportunities for inmates to get into trouble. Work gave them direction and ate up otherwise idle time, all the while demonstrating the fruits of productive labor.

The unassuming preachers who spearheaded prison reform in the 18th and 19th centuries would surely see in the violence and sexual predation common in America's prisons today stunning evidence for the platitude that "idle time is the devil's workshop." Western societies have recognized this truth at least

since ancient Athens, where Solon made idleness a criminal offense.

When the first prisons were established in America at the end of the 18th century, Americans sensibly drew from this heritage. The penitentiary at Auburn, New York, was the first to require work from its inmates. In 1825, Kentucky became the first state to adopt the so-called lease system, by which inmates were permitted to work outside the prison in chain gangs and the like. By the end of the 19th century, more than 70 percent of American inmates were employed.

But because inmate labor competed with low-skilled workers, and because those workers could vote, prison labor eventually encountered strong political opposition. The grumbling was already audible by 1853, when Andrew Johnson, then governor of Tennessee, responded by lamenting that the state prison had been converted into a "State Mechanic Institute" competing with free labor.

Peter Steiner

The growing clout of labor unions eventually impelled Congress to criminalize prison labor. In 1929, Congress passed the Hawes-Cooper Act, which permitted states to bar the importation of prisoner-made goods. More significantly, the Ashurst-Sumners Act of 1935 made it a federal crime to knowingly transport prisoner-made goods in interstate commerce. The Percy Amendment in 1979 loosened these strictures only enough to allow prison labor if inmates were paid the "prevailing wage," or union scale.

These laws remain on the books and are the reason inmates today are sentenced to idleness. Prison labor, once viewed as indispensable for restoring a healthy relationship between the criminal and society, has, in most cases, literally become a federal offense. The original conception of the penitentiary as a place where offenders could learn self-discipline through hard work has been turned on its head.

With the exception of work that generates goods for use by the state, such as license plates, and work remunerated at the union scale, which is rare, prison labor remains outlawed. This is so even though most of the low-skilled jobs that these laws were designed to protect now have been lost to foreign laborers.

By repealing the federal laws that prohibit widespread prison labor, Congress could restore a fruitful regime that once required inmates to pay for their keep and that showed some efficacy at turning criminals into disciplined, responsible citizens. Prison labor would also improve the health and spirit of the inmates themselves. When Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville surveyed America's prisons in the 1820s, they found the inmates grateful for prison labor. In their interviews with prisoners, they noted, "There is not a single one among them who did not speak of labor with a kind of gratitude, and who did not express the idea that without relief of constant occupation, life would be insufferable."

Last year, Sen. Spencer Abraham held hearings that looked into why American inmates have so much time on their hands. This was no small act of political courage, since Abraham hails from Michigan, a state synonymous with unions, which have traditionally opposed prison labor. On the other hand, perhaps organized labor will be more flexible on this issue now that the better-paying less-skilled jobs have fled to the other side of the Pacific Rim in blithe disregard for Depression-era protectionist efforts.

In any event, prison labor provides a potentially significant wedge issue for Republicans in the coming elections. Should President Clinton and the Democrats oppose repealing these laws and returning the issue to the states, they will reveal themselves to be shackled to yet another interest group whose agenda clashes with the desires of the vast majority of Americans. Even a president as rhetorically talented as Clinton will find it hard to argue that law-abiding welfare recipients should be required to work but criminals should not.

If prisoners are given the right incentives to work industriously, such as better living conditions or slightly reduced sentences, employers might once again invest in a population whose members are always on time for work and who can neither complain effectively nor quit. By deregulating prison labor and returning the issue to the states, Congress might well make prison labor as widespread and beneficial as it was when inmates were an important part of our economy—and, not coincidentally, when our streets were safer.

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Moscow's Secret Gold

by Arnold Beichman

Long ago and long forgotten, at least in today's Kremlin, is Boris Yeltsin's decision on November 6, 1992, to outlaw the Communist party as a criminal organization. Party leaders challenged that decision in the Constitutional Court. Today the Communist party is making its comeback. And with a vengeance.

Yeltsin defended himself by saying that the Communist party had suppressed basic human rights during its 70-year rule and that, in the interests of promoting world communism, it had violated the principles of international law by intervening in the internal affairs of other countries. As evidence, the Yeltsin government presented more than 3,000 documents, comprising some 10,000 pages, in the form of secret memoranda or reports made over the years to the Central Committee of the Communist party. A great many of these formerly "eyes-only" documents, now known as Fond 89, are available for study. Even the most cursory examination confirms that throughout its history, even during the Gorbachev years, the Communist party administered an immense, no-expense-spared conspiracy against the non-Communist world. A more detailed but still incomplete analysis of the documents unveils the tactical details of the party's subversion strategy.

Most of these files are reports of the illegal distribution of funds to Communist parties abroad or to Communist fronts by Moscow and its battalions. What overwhelms a reader of these documents, especially one who has followed Soviet history, are the billions of dollars spent to sponsor Moscow-controlled revolutionary movements while the Soviet peoples were suffering man-made famines and low standards of living (except, of course, for the Kremlin leadership and their regional satraps).

A 1919 document details the contents of six packages containing diamonds and pearls worth more than $1 million at the time. These packages were delivered through the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to the Comintern to be laundered abroad and thereby finance the Soviet Union's subversive activities. Russia was then in the midst of a devastating civil war that created widespread hunger and destitution. No matter; the revolution came first.

A 1974 document contains a letter to the Central Committee from the chairman of the South African Communist party asking for 100 fake South African passports to enable the party's agents to enter South Africa. Another document is from Yuri Andropov, then KGB chief and later party general secretary, confirming that 100 guns with ammunition had been delivered to the Workers' party of Cyprus.

One remarkable document dated December 31, 1975, states that the party had approved Andropov's proposal to request from the Vietnamese defense minister 10,000 Western-made automatic rifles with 10 million rounds of ammunition in exchange for the same number of Soviet-made weapons. The Western-made weapons would be distributed to unnamed foreign Communist parties and representatives of "national liberation" movements. (Andropov is all over these documents—the same Andropov who, when he came to power in 1982, was hailed in the West as a fellow liberal by American liberals.)

One of the most important archival collections deals with the creation in 1950 of an "International Trade Union Trust for the Support of Leftist Workers' Organizations" with a first-year budget of $2 million. The Soviet party contributed $1 million, Communist China $200,000, the rest coming from East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. The intent of this war chest was to create in the World Federation of Trade Unions (to which the American Federation of Labor refused to belong) a bulwark of support for Stalin and Soviet foreign policy. In 1955, the war chest reached $5 million.

From 1950 to 1973, the Soviet "Trade Union Trust" distributed $100 million to Communist parties the world over. And since the Central Committee archive is in the process of study and translation, we can be sure that this preliminary report is the tip of the iceberg. Who knows how much the Communist Party of the Soviet Union handed out between 1973 and 1991? We have already learned of the receipt of $2 million by Gus Hall, the secretary of the American Communist party, in 1989—the receipt countersigned by Anatoly Dobrynin, onetime Soviet ambassador in Washington.

With the former Communists now surging in influence in Moscow, Soviet archives not yet opened will probably remain secret for now (even though the release of documents has been a big dollar-earner for the Russian Treasury). But Fond 89 is enough to embarrass, yet again, those who scoffed at the idea that "Moscow gold" was behind the international Communist movement. The dull, plodding bookkeepers in the Central Committee and the signed receipts meticulously saved for posterity tell the strangest story of the 20th century.

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The Way the Jude Works

By Andrew Ferguson

With the disastrous showing of the Forbes campaign in the New Hampshire primary on February 20, different political soothsayers have reacted in different ways. Some have asked: "What will Steve Forbes do now?" Others have asked: "What will the pro-growth, low-tax, social moderates do now?" And others, those of us entranced by the frivolities of American politics, have asked: "What will Jude Wanniski do now?"

It's a silly question, really, since the answer is so obvious. Wanniski—the man called (by himself) "the most influential political economist of the last generation" and the strategist credited (mostly by himself) with launching the Forbes campaign—will continue to be Wanniski. Forward-looking. Optimistic. Delusional.

"Believe me, all the Forbes enthusiasts were thrilled to pieces with the results in New Hampshire," Wanniski said, 48 hours after the vote. Thrilled? To pieces? With a distant fourth-place finish and 12 percent of the vote in a state Forbes earlier had a chance of winning?

"He has the resources to go on," Wanniski said. "He's clearly the best man to be president. And the good news is he's brought in Malcolm Wallop [the former Republican senator from Wyoming], who has superb political skills. He'll go full time into the operation.

"I still think Steve is going to be the nominee."

To dismiss Wanniski's post-New Hampshire assessment as the cynical cheerleading of a spin doctor is to misunderstand the man. For the explanation is indelibly Jude-like: The bad news is really good news, thinly disguised, and even if the bad news really is bad, a white knight is arriving to make it good. Even if the white knight is a retired and obscure United States senator from a state with half the population of San Antonio.

That incorrigible optimism explains, in part, Wanniski's appeal. But only in part. Twenty years after he emerged as the chief pamphleteer of "supply-side economics," he continues to roil Republican politics, having flirted with the presidential campaigns of Ronald Reagan, Jack Kemp, Jerry Brown, Ross Perot, Bob Dole, and now Forbes. Which may say as much about the Republican party as it does about Jude Wanniski.

I wish," George Will once said of Wanniski, "that I were as confident about *something* as he is of *everything*." Given that it comes from George Will, this is a statement of amazing power. For Wanniski, former *Wall Street Journal* editorial writer and now an economics consultant, certitude is the stock in trade. So, just as crucially, is eccentricity. He is a publicist in the old sense of the term, a popularizer and dramatizer, who has applied his gifts not least to the story of his own career. No accounting of it would be complete without essential anecdotes.

His grandfather was a Pennsylvania coal miner and dedicated Communist who gave his grandson a copy of *Das Kapital* at high school graduation. Jude himself was raised in Brooklyn—the Dodgers are a recurring motif in his writing—and became a newspaperman, working in Alaska and then Las Vegas. In his *Worldly Power: The Making of the Wall Street Journal*, Edward Scharff devotes nearly a chapter to Wanniski and recounts much of the legend: how Wanniski reported to his new job at the *National Observer* in 1962, driving up to the offices in a silver Buick Riviera convertible wearing a gold lamé sports coat and mirrored sunglasses, a Las Vegas showgirl on his arm; how, in the mid-70s, he took Arthur Laffer and then-White House deputy chief of staff Dick Cheney out for drinks and encouraged Laffer to explain supply-side economics by drawing his eponymous curve on a napkin; and how, in 1978, he was fired at last from the *Journal* for canvassing a suburban New Jersey train station on behalf of a political candidate. The candidate was his fellow supply-sider Jeff Bell, and the man Wanniski canvassed was one of his own bosses at the *Journal*.

To certitude and eccentricity you may add indis-

cretion. Wanniski first plunged into presidential politics with Ronald Reagan in 1979, having tried unsuccessfully to convince Jack Kemp to make a run—a quadrennial exercise in pointlessness Wanniski shares with many Republicans. By this time Wanniski had gone the route of all supply-siders: He had set up a lucrative consulting business, wooing businessmen away from their demand-side delusions. To the same end he had also written an entertaining popular exposition of supply-side economics, called with characteristic grandiosity, *The Way the World Works*. It was enormously influential to a generation of tax-cutting and gold-bug policy wonks—"It totally rearranged my electrons," one said recently—and remains, 18 years later, Wanniski's great achievement.

In preparation for the 1980 campaign, Wanniski, Laffer, and others privately briefed Reagan on the benefits of a tax-rate reduction, which Reagan, counseled by Bell, had advocated as early as 1976. In public, however, Wanniski "overreached"—the generous term used by Martin Anderson in his history of the Reagan years, *Revolution*. The left-wing journalists Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway published an interview with Wanniski in the *Village Voice*, under the title "The Battle for Reagan's Mind." "Wanniski," wrote supply-sider Bruce Bartlett at the time, "seemed to take credit for inventing the Laffer curve, inventing the Kemp-Roth bill, and . . . making [Jack Kemp] a major national spokesman." Wanniski also claimed a healthy tax cut would reduce prostitution, pornography, drug use, divorce, and abortion.

Kent Lemon

Jude Wanniski

The *Voice* article was the first iteration of what became, for Republicans, an inconvenient caricature throughout the 80s: of Reagan the marionette, tugged this way then that by opportunists of various colorations. The candidate was not amused. "Reagan and his campaign staff immediately dropped Wanniski," wrote Anderson. "And, to the best of my knowledge, Wanniski never spoke to Reagan again, and never . . . played any role in the development and implementation of national economic policy after Reagan was elected president."

Publicists of lesser gifts could not have survived the humiliation, but Wanniski is the Consultant Who Will Not Die. He owes his continued viability to several factors. Disdaining conventional wisdom in all its forms, he is eminently quotable, making him a favorite of financial journalists hoping to juice up a story. He has the ear, in particular, of Robert Novak, the most influential political reporter in the country, and limited access to his old outlet, the *Journal* editorial page. From his office in Morristown, New Jersey, he faxes to favored clients and reporters and policy-makers a breathless series of notes, memos, bulletins, and newsletters. And above all there is his persistence, a tenacity of almost superhuman proportions, on behalf of his causes, which range from the absolutely immediate necessity of a reduction in the capital-gains tax rate to the absolute inevitability of a Forbes presidency to the absolutely catastrophic consequences of a failure to return to the gold standard.

"He is simply indefatigable," says one journalist who has been the object of Wanniski's barrages, "both in his self-promotion and in his attention to whatever his cause of the day is." His newsletters are studded with insinuations of his intimacy with the great and powerful—Treasury officials, Capitol Hill players, Fed governors, and especially the big guy himself, Alan Greenspan. "I'm sure Greenspan will take his calls, say, once every six months," says a Greenspan friend. "Alan's a pretty accessible guy—he'll take your call if you have any standing at all. And then Jude can write about it for the next six months: 'Well, I've been talking to Greenspan . . . '"

For a brief period beginning in 1994, Wanniski turned his attentions to Bob Dole. "I remember, if he hadn't gotten any response from Dole for a while, he'd come down here and just sit in the press office," says a Dole staffer. "He knew Dole would have to show up sooner or later. And when he did, Jude would just . . . well, 'tackle' isn't the right word. But he'd get hold of Dole. Dole never paid him much attention, though." Another journalist recalls meeting with Dole in '94. "What's with Wanniski, anyway?" Dole asked the assembled reporters. "He got Elizabeth's fax num-

ber, I don't know how. Now he's sending faxes to her too!"

For the most part, Wanniski's romancing of Dole consisted of offering unsolicited advice. "Do you still have the memos I wrote when I tried to get you to do the [Jesse] Jackson show?" Wanniski wrote in anticipation of a Dole appearance on CNN. "Review them now for Larry King. . . . Did you read my little piece in the Morristown newspaper? I fax it along again. Its message will be of use on *Meet the Press*." The romance was reciprocal in a uniquely one-sided fashion: Jude would offer Dole advice, and in return Jude would praise Dole in his newsletter.

But the relationship was ill-starred, as anyone familiar with Dole, who makes no secret of his contempt for supply-side theory, would have guessed. In a March 1995 profile, the *New York Times Magazine* quoted Dole making unflattering remarks about tax cutters. Wanniski was crestfallen. "All my work!" he cried to acquaintances at the time. "All my work down the drain!" Today he speaks of Dole with undisguised contempt. "I tried to teach him," Wanniski told me bitterly, "but he just couldn't cut it."

The Dole courtship, curious as it was, is not the strangest Wanniski has engaged in over the years. Even in print, he has enlisted some odd fellows in the supply-side cause. He has written often in praise of Karl Marx: "emphatically a gold-standard free-trader." He recently told *Business Week* that Lyndon LaRouche is "a gold-standard guy" whose followers are "not trained in demand-model economics," which may be why Wanniski has hired several of them at his consulting firm. Moving, however slightly, closer to earth, he worked tirelessly for the conversion of Jerry Brown in late 1991. "He thinks in terms of entrepreneurial capitalism," he told the *Journal* at the time. Aside from Forbes, his political heroes of the moment are Robert Bennett, a nondescript senator from Utah who flirts with gold buggery, and New Jersey Rep. Bob Torricelli, a liberal Democrat whose ideology seems to intersect with Wanniski's at a single point—a desire to cut the capital-gains tax. "If you're a politician and you return his phone call," says an old associate, "he'll decide you're savior of the world."

"We can now confidently predict," Wanniski faxed his clients in June 1992, "H. Ross Perot will be elected President of the United States, probably by a landslide . . . " The memo's inspiration seems to have come from the fact that Perot had granted Wanniski an interview the week before. Wanniski wrote that he "could safely make these predictions on the information that [campaign consultant] Ed Rollins had accepted Perot's offer to be co-campaign manager. . . . Rollins's acceptance was the last piece of information I needed." He offered his picture of a Perot cabinet: Ann Richards or Wallop as vice president, zillionaire Ted Forstmann as Treasury secretary, and Jesse Jackson as secretary of state, who would "focus his energies on pro-growth policies everywhere."

When I asked Wanniski why his prediction of a Perot victory had gone awry, he grew bitter again. "Ed Rollins," he said. "He wrecked that campaign. When he was hired, that's the point I knew it was over."

"A Perot Presidency would be a colossal event in the history of the world," Wanniski wrote in those happy days of June 1992, and he has brought the same extravagance of speech to the Forbes campaign. "Steve is a secular Christ," he told me. When the Christian Coalition began attacking Forbes in Iowa, Wanniski fired up the fax machine. The Coalition, he wrote, "is one of the most active money changers in the temple atop Capitol Hill, always careful to ask for more than Congress can deliver. Its director, Ralph Reed, is clearly willing to bear false witness against his neighbor, Steve Forbes, as he did yesterday, the Lord's Day. . . ." The fax drew a sharp rebuke from Forbes campaign manager Bill Dal Col: "We cannot be held responsible for what he writes or says." Wanniski, according to a Forbes insider, has been barred from the campaign headquarters.

Which returns us to the question, What will Jude do now? The Forbes campaign is a test of one of his central hypotheses, that tax cuts are the surest path to electoral victory. The evidence so far is not good. Forbes's vote totals in Iowa and New Hampshire—10 percent and 12 percent, respectively—conform roughly to those of Kemp in 1988, the last candidate to make tax cuts the centerpiece of his campaign.

"He lionizes people to an absurd extent," says a former Wanniski favorite. "And then when you fail him, he turns on you with an unbelievable viciousness." The story of the supply-side movement is to a large extent the story of other supply-siders' falling in with Wanniski, followed by the inevitable falling out. It has happened with Laffer, Bell, even Kemp, who has been locked with Wanniski in an intense intellectual symbiosis for 20 years. "Alas, he has become one of the nomenklatura in the Kremlin on the Potomac," Wanniski wrote in 1991, in response to some now-forgotten apostasy.

"My guess," says one supply-sider who has felt the lash, "is that he'll turn on Steve when the campaign finally fails." For now, Wanniski shows no sign of doing so. He is optimistic, forward-looking, without a trace of the frustration that comes when the world doesn't work the way it's supposed to. ♦

How Winston Churchill Can Save Us—Again

By Larry P. Arnn

The passing of the Soviet menace has proved a strangely mixed blessing in the United States. It has tended to unite liberals in pursuit of a sentimental foreign policy that matches what they wish to do at home. At the same time, it has sown division in conservative ranks. A commemoration is upon us on March 5, one that can solve some of these dilemmas, if only we will ponder it well.

March 5 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Winston Churchill's appearance in Fulton, Missouri, and the delivery of what became known as the "Iron Curtain" speech. In it Churchill announced the beginning of the Cold War and described a policy by which it could be fought. In it he presented a plan for the new world, the world created by the world wars, by technological conflict, and by the preeminence of American power and principles. The world he described is our world, even now.

We remember the speech most for its bold condemnation of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe: "From Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent." That was also the part that received the most dramatic, and the most negative, comment at the time. Recall the background: Britain, led by Churchill, had fought alone against Hitler for a full year after the fall of France. Hitler had attacked the Soviet Union, and Stalin had joined Churchill in the war against Hitler. Churchill, relentlessly wooing a reluctant America, had built with FDR an alliance that became a full partnership after the attack on Pearl Harbor and Hitler's astonishing declaration of war upon America.

The war was won by these allies. Yet toward the end strains began to appear in their alliance, strains that soon became cracks and finally a full-fledged fissure that separated the eastern from the western allies. In the Iron Curtain speech, given less than seven months after the end of hostilities, Churchill made the separation a recognized fact.

In America, both the isolationist and the liberal press denounced the speech, if for different reasons. Stalin attacked it bitterly. The Labor government in London that had supplanted Churchill was made uncomfortable by strong protests from the socialist rank-and-file. Even President Truman kept a public distance from the content of the speech.

But that public distance was belied by Truman's private conduct. Churchill had warned Truman that an "iron curtain" was being drawn across Europe almost a year earlier, two days after the end of the war in Europe. And he met with Truman on February 10, 1946, less than a month before he spoke, to discuss what he was going to say in Fulton. Truman had also received on February 22 the famous "long cable" from George F. Kennan, then American ambassador in Moscow, that called for a new American policy toward the expansionist Soviet Union. Truman traveled down to Fulton on a train with Churchill, where he read the speech and made only approving comments. Then he stood on the platform and introduced Churchill in Fulton, an extraordinary fact given that Churchill was out of power. Finally, Truman began immediately after the speech the series of maneuvers that built the postwar foreign policy of the United States. The policies of containment, of American commitment to Europe and other key strategic points, and the decision to maintain a dominant nuclear and conventional defense in peacetime followed naturally from the pronouncement at Fulton.

We cannot understand the importance of the speech without recalling these events, each a hammer blow that shaped the postwar world. Yet the greatest significance of the speech does not rest in its relation to these immediate incidents. It is decisively a statement of policy and principle for democratic nations, beset with aggressive modern tyranny, menaced by weapons built with advanced technology. The speech rises to a place above defense and foreign relations, to that summit "where true politics and strategy are one." We can for this reason learn its highest lessons as well today as we could 50 years ago.

We must begin with the fact that it is addressed to the American people. "It is a solemn moment for the American Democracy. For with primacy in power is also joined an awe inspiring accountability to the

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future." A few days later Churchill would say a startling thing: "I come to you at a time when the United States stands at the highest point of majesty and power ever attained by any community since the fall of the Roman Empire." Churchill, that lion of Britain, was the first to declare that America was even greater than Britain at her peak, greater than any other nation in modernity. For a model to follow, America could only look back to antiquity. Her model must be that greatest of empires, Rome.

And yet America, unlike Britain and Rome, had never been forced to assume such a grand role. For most of American history, foreign policy had been a small concern. We were sheltered in our hemisphere, preeminent, unassailable, preoccupied with our own affairs public and private. For this reason we were able to sit out much of both world wars. For this reason we held back from securing the peace after the first war.

Nor was this the only reason. America's principles have indeed a global, or rather a universal, reach. But they are not the kind to lead to empire. The United States was born with a statement of rights that belong to every man, in every country, in every time. Those rights define both the scope and the purpose of government. Government exists "to secure these rights"; it derives its "just powers from the consent of the governed." What if the people of an imperial domain withheld or withdrew their consent from the empire? How then could an American empire maintain its power?

Churchill spent much of his life encouraging American leadership in world affairs—encouraging it often in vain, encouraging it often to the derision of his countrymen who said it would not come. He had coaxed and begged America into the war, knowing that American intervention was the only hope, and knowing that it might not come. In a miracle deliverance, it had come, and with it had come certain victory. Yet Churchill, who had prayed for that deliverance, found himself fretting when America would not listen to his advice about the prosecution of the war or the peace to follow it. Churchill, half American himself, held an unshakable faith in America all his life. By 1946, it was a faith that had weathered many storms of experience.

Churchill came to Fulton, then, not to denounce the Soviet Union, but rather to praise, and also to guide, the greatest power in the history of the world. It is no exaggeration to say that he conceived this as his highest remaining task, in the years left to him.

In order to guide America, Churchill proposed "an overall strategic concept." He chose one of breathtaking reach: "What then is the overall strategic concept which we should inscribe today? It is nothing less than the safety and welfare, the freedom and progress of all the homes and families of all the men and women in all the lands."

This is the language of American internationalism, a 20th-century construct. That language, as it first developed here, is concocted from the theories that underlie modern liberalism. The two Democratic presidents who articulated that language brought to foreign policy the same utopian vision, the same bent for engineering the new man, that inspired them in politics at home. Woodrow Wilson led us into a war "to end all wars." Franklin Roosevelt laid out as his war aim a new "Bill of Rights," based upon the acceptance of new "self-evident truths" in the economic realm. Every man would have a living, even if that living must come at the expense of another. The problem of economic want could be solved once and for all, and universally.

How, in contrast, would Churchill achieve the "safety and welfare, the freedom and progress, of all the homes and families of all the men and women in all the lands?" Here is what he said: "I have not yet spoken of poverty and privation which are in many cases the prevailing anxiety. But if the dangers of war and tyranny are removed, there is no doubt that science and cooperation can bring in the next few years to the world, certainly in the next few decades newly taught in the sharpening school of war, an expansion of material well-being beyond anything that has yet occurred in human experience." And he quoted Bourke Cochran, the anti-progressive Democrat who was one of his oldest friends: "'There is enough for all. The earth is a generous mother; she will provide in plentiful abundance food for all her children if they will but cultivate her soil in justice and in peace.'"

The mission of the American empire may well be the "safety and welfare" of all the homes and families in all the lands, but the people who live in those homes will be obliged to win their welfare for themselves. Their mother earth has a generous nature to those who "cultivate her soil in justice and in peace."

What conception of justice could these people, spread "through all the lands" and answering to many creeds and codes of law, share with one another? They strove, said Churchill, to "bring their family up in fear of the Lord," or "upon ethical conceptions which often play their potent part." The dictates both of revelation and of reason spoke to all of them in a common fashion, and it was upon the basis of these dictates that the "overall strategic conception" had to be pursued.

Here America had preeminence. America was best able to "proclaim in fearless tones" the basis of just government, "the great principles of freedom and the rights of man." The United States was not, Churchill argued, the inventor or the sole inheritor of these principles. They belonged to all, but they were the special bequest of the "English-speaking world." They came to us "through Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the Habeas Corpus, trial by jury, and the English common law." They found their "most famous expression in the American Declaration of Independence."

It was not by happenstance that Churchill mentioned the Declaration as the great flowering of the English-speaking world. In his one and only Fourth of July speech, given also at the end of a world war, Churchill said in 1918: "The Declaration of Independence is not only an American document. It follows on the Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights as the third great title-deed on which the liberties of the English-speaking people are founded. By it we lost an Empire, but by it we also preserved an Empire. By applying its principles and learning its lesson we have maintained our communion with the powerful Commonwealths our children have established beyond the seas."

Chas Fagan

The Declaration sprang from a well that "is here on the banks of the Thames, in this island which is the birthplace and origin of the British and American race." At the same time its reach, as its meaning, he thought universal: "All this means that the people of any country have the right . . . to choose or change the character or form of government under which they dwell. . . . Here is the message of the British and American peoples to mankind."

It may seem a deft maneuver, to adopt as a source of unity between two countries the document that wrought their violent separation. But it was one Churchill practiced consistently in British politics for more than four decades. He had watched socialism take root in the soil prepared by the British class system. He had seen the remedy in the "equality of rights," which is "the whole basis of our political system." To cultivate this doctrine, to plant it deep in the interests of a broad middle class, to make it flourish in that old soil of English history until it choked out the socialist weed—this was the work of his life. Supporting the British Monarchy and Empire as he understood them, still he held no principles incompatible with this task.

Thus, the idea of the common bond between the "English-speaking peoples" was born early in Churchill's career and was consistently applied. The power of Britain—a mini-state even then compared to the behemoth nations—depended upon its connection with the "children," with the "kith and ken" around the globe in the Commonwealth. But for Churchill, this connection reached much farther merely than the nations who still salute the Queen or join in the Commonwealth games. It included all those nations who shared in the British heritage, either by former political connection or by proven friendship to the ideas that emanate from it.

Churchill dwelled famously in the Fulton speech on "the special relationship" between Britain and the United States. That relationship forms the "crux of what I have come here to say." "Neither the sure prevention of war, nor the continuous rise of world organization will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States."

This relationship required a full cooperation on matters military and economic. It required a close coordination of diplomacy. It required the jealous guarding of the "secret knowledge or experience of the atomic bomb," which at that time was thought to belong only to America, Britain, and Canada.

These friends in the cause of free government, who had demonstrated their ability to practice it, must hold real power and must use that power for good. This advice may now seem dated. Power has arisen in countries all over the world, many of them friendly, and it has declined relatively in Britain. The empire is gone, the Commonwealth more form than substance. Yet recall the cooperation between Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and the massive good it achieved. Consider even now to whom we would turn with confidence in any moment of extreme peril.

The United States still faces the challenge laid down for it in the Iron Curtain speech. Liberals know how they wish to respond to that challenge. They are gladly free of the paradox presented by the Soviet Union, whose socialist vision they admired as they might an overzealous sibling, even as the horrors of that sibling plagued them. That embarrassment removed, they know what to do: The whole nation can be a village, and so can the world. Let's help our neighbors abroad, just as we help them here at home. Welfare for the world.

On the other hand, conservatives have been divided by the victory we have won. They have not united upon any doctrine of international action, nor even upon the idea that international action is vital. They toy with isolationism; they tinker with protectionism.

They must turn from this and face up to a higher calling, a calling that emanates from the principles that made our nation what it is. If we listen to Churchill, we will follow that calling. We will recall as we do that self-government is an entitlement of all, and yet its achievement and sustenance are the highest—and the rarest—political accomplishments. The nations who have it carry a responsibility to the world, and also to themselves and to their posterity. They are right, then, to consult their interests as they do their duty in the world.

Duty and interest alike encourage them to shoulder the burden of their own defense and the defense of their cause among men. To do it well, they must have courage and persistence, for the world still presents awful dangers.

They must also cultivate that high prudence that was Churchill's hallmark. He studied the problems of security and foreign policy for a lifetime. He knew them in their full dimension, as elements of politics more generally. Our half brother, he also proved the most profound student of the American mission in the world this century has seen. If we are to be worthy of the place we hold, we must learn from him, and soon. ♦

Non-Partisanship as a Partisan Weapon

By Eric Felten

Becky Cain, president of the League of Women Voters, doesn't like labels. "We don't characterize people by labels," she says. "I think that's part of the problem of taking the issues and saying if you're one way or another, you are therefore in this category." Known primarily as the sponsor of candidate debates in elections around the country, the League of Women Voters carefully cultivates its image as the non-partisan arbiter of good government and civic participation. How closely does the League guard its reputation for non-partisanship? Last year Democrats in the California state assembly offered a resolution praising the "non-partisan" League on the 75th anniversary of its founding. Republicans were more than happy to agree to bestow the honor—just so long as the word "non-partisan" was dropped from the resolution. The suggestion was not well received: The

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ensuing row quickly descended into a parliamentary free-for-all. Then-speaker Willie Brown withdrew the resolution rather than let the term "non-partisan" be stripped.

The Republicans had a point. The League frequently pops up in places you would not expect to see an organization that uses "non-partisan" as a mantra. Take the Emergency Campaign to Protect America's Children, Parents and Families. As the budget battle crested in December, Marian Wright Edelman—president of the Children's Defense Fund and den mother of the liberal pack—formed a coalition of organizations dedicated to thwarting any budget deal. The Emergency Campaign ran advertisements, organized a barrage of calls and letters to lawmakers, and staged a candlelight vigil at the Capitol. "It is unjust to destroy vital laws investing in our children," proclaimed Mrs. Edelman, announcing the campaign. "It is morally indefensible for some to claim that this destruction of our children's safety net is being carried out to 'protect' them." Joining Mrs. Edelman's crusade was a veritable A-list of liberal activist groups—and the League of Women Voters of the United States. The League was in the thick of the most partisan fight Washington has seen in decades.

"Non-partisan" does not mean "non-political," Cain is quick to point out. "Issues have never been partisan to us," she says. "There are several ways to get people involved in the process. We do think that advocating for your position is valid." But, says Cain, the League does not operate the way other lobbies do: Unlike groups that start with a point of view and sign up the like-minded, the League educates its members by giving them pro-and-con materials explaining the issues of the day, and then lets them decide the group's agenda.

That is not to say that the grass-roots membership of the League was polled on whether to join the Emergency Campaign. No, becoming part of the coalition was an executive decision. Nor was this the only such decision made in recent years by the national leadership of the League. Lawyers from the League took the lead in litigation challenging congressional term-limits laws in Arkansas and Washington state. In poll after poll, some 75 percent of the American public supports term limits. It is the rare issue that cuts across all of the normal demographic divides: Regardless of gender, race, income, or region, some three-fourths of those polled reliably voice their support for term limits. How is it, then, that an organization ostensibly committed to acting on its members' druthers came up with a term-limits agenda so at odds with general grass-roots sentiment? Was the League able to convince—or rather, educate—its members about the evils of term limits before asking them to reach consensus? Hardly. According to Robin Seaborn, who served on the national board of the League of Women Voters from 1990 to 1994, the attack on term limits was executed not only without the consensus of League members, but over their objections as well. "There was no consensus process on term limits," Seaborn says. "The local League chapters did not even know that the League was behind the legal challenges." As soon as members found out, "there was a lot of backlash."

"To us, it's a basic good-government concern," Cain says, defending her end run around the membership. "Even if this is a very popular issue," she lectures, term limits are "not the legal way to handle it."

When the League does undertake its elaborate rituals of education and consensus-building, the results are almost uniformly endorsements of the liberal welfare state. The League lobbies Congress for public funding of elections, stricter environmental regulations, gun control, increased funding for the United Nations, and socialized medicine. The League opposes congressional Republicans' efforts at regulatory reform and has repeatedly fought the Balanced Budget Amendment. The group was involved in the passage of both the Family Leave Act and the so-called Motor-Voter law. When it comes to the current budget impasse, the League has a solution at the ready: "The responsible route to serious, long-term deficit reduction," according to a policy statement in the League's *National Voter* magazine, "is through selective cuts in defense spending and increased revenue through a broad-based and progressive tax system."

Beyond the League's support for free trade, Cain has to make a rubber-limbed stretch to find another example of the supposedly non-partisan group's boosting a GOP-favored policy. "When Richard Nixon—pretty sure a Republican—suggested the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, we had a position that said we ought to have some federal government regulation of the environment," Cain offers. "We supported him 100 percent in his creation of that organization."

One reason the League is able to arrive so consistently at policy prescriptions favoring the expansion of the federal role and responsibilities is that the membership of the organization is disposed to smile upon the growth of government. But it isn't the only reason. According to Seaborn, members are not so much educated by the League as they are indoctrinated by it. "We didn't really look at all sides of issues," she says of the bias in the League's educational materials. "We

would run the gamut from liberal to moderate, at best." For example, in the League's educational package on health-care financing, the option of medical savings accounts is conspicuously absent.

In the League's health-care study, conducted from 1990 through 1993, members were given study guides and reading lists before sitting down for their discussion groups. The discussion groups then reached their various opinions and mailed them to the national headquarters where the results were tallied. The results became the League's official position on health care, a position for which Cain and the national League apparatus furiously lobbied. Not only did they lobby relentlessly, they did so from the moral high ground—when Cain went up to Capitol Hill, she made it clear she was not representing the grunts of a frightened and confused *lumpenproletariat*, but the enlightened decisions of a comprehensively informed citizenry. "League members across the country carefully examined the problems and considered solutions to the health-care crisis. After thousands of hours of grassroots debate, League members reached consensus on health-care reform. That consensus is the basis for my testimony today."

That was nonsense. In truth, the very structure of the League's inquiry into health-care reform was designed to arrive at an outcome favoring socialized medicine. To get a flavor of the League's health-care primer, consider the discussion group "Leader's Guide." The first section of the guide asks for the discussion groups to determine what the goals should be for the U.S. health-care system. Several possible goals are suggested, among them the "equitable distribution of health care services," and a "minimum basic level of care." But these are, it turns out, not just options: The next section *assumes* they are the only appropriate goals, as opposed to, say, concerns about how much all this might *cost*. Those are dealt with, but in the most perfunctory fashion. Consider the treatment of whether dental care should be included in the minimum basic package:

> Regular dental care plays an important role in the prevention and maintenance of good health. The condition of one's teeth and gums has a direct effect upon the health of the body. Dental care benefits are not included in all private health benefit plans, and Medicaid dental benefits vary from state to state. Dental care, like all possible components of a minimum basic level of care, requires funding, and if one chooses to include this criterion, one must realize that additional revenues need to be allocated to finance this benefit.

This is, of course, a lovely and oblique euphemism for a tax hike. One wonders how eager the members of the League discussion groups would have been to pile on every suggested benefit, as they did, if each question had included an estimate of how many dollars it might cost each of the participants.

Cain went to Capitol Hill, study in hand, to voice the League's support for President Clinton's health-care plan—though she made it clear that ClintonCare was merely a first step in the right direction. The League's lobbyists, led by Lloyd Leonard, also scuffled through the tiled halls of Congress doing their part for a federal takeover of health care. Given all this activity and the League's commitment to pushing for as large a governmental role as possible in health care, it was only natural that the League soon expanded its efforts with a television ad campaign. What was strange—indeed, astonishing—was the premise of the campaign: that the League of Women Voters was merely a disinterested source supplying unbiased information.

"We're not backing any particular plan," said a disembodied voice to the accompaniment of a worried piano at the outset of each commercial. "We want decisions to be based on facts." What an odd claim, given that the League not only very much had a plan of its own, but was also fiercely lobbying for the legislation drawn up by Hillary Rodham Clinton's health-care task force. But it was a perfectly reasonable claim, according to Cain. "We have two different organizations," she says without embarrassment. The League of Women Voters of the United States, you see, is not to be confused with the League of Women Voters Education Fund. It was the League U.S. that lobbied for socialized medicine. The League Education Fund, by contrast, supposedly did no such thing—it merely provided disinterested information.

It is not uncommon for Washington interest groups and activists to have so-called sister organizations—tax-exempt charitable outfits created to do the groups' non-political work. But few organizations pull the old 501(c)3 bait-and-switch with more alacrity than the League of Women Voters. The group's Education Fund has a separate staff from the League U.S., according to Cain. But the two organizations share the same office and much more: Not only is Cain both the chair of the League Education Fund and the president of the League U.S., the boards of the two groups are identical. Indeed, the board of the Education Fund is chosen by the board of the League U.S.—that is, the League board chooses to choose itself. And who's to know the difference? When looking at the League's materials, one has to search for the small print under the big League of Women Voters logo to see whether they are products of the Education Fund or the League U.S.

Having the tax-exempt Education Fund not only

Michael Ramirez

allows the League to tap into corporate foundation cash, it also clears the way to the federal trough. Between 1993 and 1994, the League's Education Fund took in more than $1 million in federal grant dollars, most of which was used by the League to conduct its famously unbiased and non-partisan environmental seminars on nuclear waste, groundwater contamination, clean air, and recycling.

Perhaps even more important than opening up the money pipeline, the act of maintaining two organizations allows the League to persist in its claims that it has no interest in any particular political outcome. When the League holds candidate debates or puts out voter guides, it is done under the umbrella of the Education Fund. The disinterested good-government image cultivated through the Education Fund lends a crucial sheen to the League's lobbying efforts.

Even so, the Education Fund's health-care ad campaign was perfectly legitimate, says Cain, because unlike the League U.S., the Education Fund had no position on health-care legislation and did no lobbying: "When we do voter education, we do not in any way connect it to our advocacy work."

Nonsense, replies Seaborn, who during the advertising campaign was the secretary/treasurer of the Education Fund: "We were doing political action and voter education at the same," she says. "To me it is hypocrisy to have both happening at the same time." Though Seaborn won't go so far as to suggest that the parallel efforts of the League U.S. and the League Education Fund in any way violated tax law, she does say that "it put us in an untenable position."

The ads were unobjectionable, says Cain with clipped assurance: "They did not advocate, in any way, a plan." Perhaps not—but then how would the League U.S. have kept itself busy? If there were still a question whether the League Education Fund's health-care ad campaign was in reality a clunky bit of propaganda designed to further the League's political lobbying, a glance at the text of the ads would clear the matter up. "What percentage of Americans without health insurance are in working families?" goes the commercial quiz. The answer? "Eighty-four percent of Americans who lack health insurance are in families that work hard and pay taxes, but don't get health insurance on the job." For starters, the convoluted statistic the League chose to broadcast—the percentage of Americans without health insurance who are in working families—is designed to be shocking. Had the question been "What percentage of people in working families lack health insurance?" the answer would have been in the mid-teens.

Having given the answer to its quiz as 84 percent, the League's commercial closes out with an emotionally charged recap: "That's eight out of ten of us. And that's a fact." Hardly. The casual viewer couldn't help but take away the idea that eight out of ten of "us" in working families lack health insurance. That's all wrong, of course, but it is the obvious meaning of the League's ad. In other words, either the League is hopelessly inept with basic explanations of facts and figures, or it purposely cooked the statistical books in an effort to frighten viewers into the arms of Hillary Rodham Clinton. Neither interpretation reflects well on the information gurus at the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

These sorts of shabby shenanigans convinced Robin Seaborn not only to leave the board of the League, but to leave the group she had been a member of for 20 years. "When I was a young naive member, I truly thought the League was non-partisan," she says. But when she joined the national board and tried to challenge the organization's orthodoxies, she was simply informed by the League's lobbyists that she was "out of step." In a spirit more of sadness than of bitterness, she came to the conclusion that "it was a lost cause."

She has a point. ♦

The Hidden Politics of 'Personality Parade'

By Tucker Carlson

Late last year, Walter Anderson, the editor of *Parade* magazine, was summoned to the White House to meet the president. Anderson had just been nominated to serve as a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, a little-known post whose primary perk appears to be a grip-and-grin with the commander in chief. After waiting his turn in line with other minor luminaries, Anderson received an audience with Bill Clinton. The editor's voice quickens as he describes what happened next. "When I got to him," Anderson recounts, "I was introduced as the editor of *Parade*. The first thing that the president said was, 'I read Personality Parade every week.' And I said, 'Of course you do, Mr. President. Everybody does.'"

Anderson is given to hyperbole, so it would be easy to dismiss his account as a fish story. Except that at least one part of it is undeniably true. Just about everybody *does* read Personality Parade, the catty gossip column penned by the pseudonymous Walter Scott that for nearly 40 years has appeared on the inside cover of *Parade*, the Sunday supplement. Considering that *Parade* is now the most widely distributed magazine in the country—reaching 37,156,000 households and perhaps 81 million readers every week via 340 Sunday newspapers—it seems likely Bill Clinton does scan Personality Parade from time to time.

And our president must like what he sees.

Personality Parade has never been your average gossip column. Along with the obligatory items about hunky celebs and boozing starlets, the column has since its inception in the late 1950s served up a steady stream of left-of-center agitprop. For every answer to questions about Madonna's failed acting career or Johnny Cash's arrest record, there are others that contain a clear—if not always straightforward—political agenda. In Walter Scott's Personality Parade, gossip is more than simply entertainment; it's a political weapon. And nobody has benefited more from its use than Bill Clinton.

> WALTER SCOTT'S CATTY GOSSIP COLUMN IS MORE THAN JUST ENTERTAINMENT: IT'S A POLITICAL WEAPON. NOBODY HAS BENEFITED MORE FROM IT THAN BILL CLINTON.

Consider a few of the many Clinton-related questions and answers that have appeared in the column in recent years. Any truth to the rumors that Bill Clinton is an incurable womanizer? queried "K.C." from New York City in February 1995. None at all, assured Personality Parade: "If there was any hard evidence that the President of the U.S. was womanizing, you can be certain it would have appeared by now in the media." In fact, the column asserted in response to another question on the subject, the president's real problem is not adultery, but a failure "to come up with a more effective strategy to combat today's tabloid-style journalism."

What about Clinton's enormous 1993 tax increase? asked "D.L.T." from Seattle in January 1995. No reason to be upset about that, assured Personality Parade, since the tax is "mostly on the wealthy." And why would anybody complain about soaking the rich? After all, readers learned in another item later that year, the "average American" is "socially progressive."

When Elise T. Bowman of Chaptico, Md., wrote in January 1994 to express concern that the hundreds of experts working on Hillary Clinton's health-care plan might be costing taxpayers a bundle, the column did its best to put her mind at ease. It is hard to know, came the reply, exactly how much in expenses the "10 to 15 people" working full time on the plan might be ringing up. But "even if their salaries, travel and other expenses amounted to millions, . . . it would be only a tiny fraction of America's 1993 health expenditure."

The column's positive spin has been extended to nearly every member of the Clinton administration. In one column from early 1994, White House flack George Stephanopoulos made an appearance as a "tousle-haired bachelor" irresistible to women. Hillary Clinton, who was also the subject of an unprecedented entire issue of

Parade, has assumed almost saintlike qualities in the column, appearing again and again as a "highly intelligent and ambitious" woman with "her own impressive credentials."


Walter Scott's
Personality Parade

For a while after he was charged with indecent exposure in an adult movie theater, Fernando Herman was persona non grata in Hollywood. Now I hear he's making a comeback. How did he manage that?—A.W., New Haven, Conn.

A It's true Pee-wee (real name: Paul Reubens), 43, had trouble finding work after pleading no contest in 1991 to charges of indecent exposure, but his pals in the entertainment industry stood by him. "Paul got a bum rap," says the satirist Fran Lebowitz, reflecting the consensus of opinion among showbiz types. "I was astonished by the public reaction to his arrest." The comic now has a recurring role on "Murphy Brown" and appears in the new film "Dunston Checks In," with Jason Alexander. He's also in "Matilda," a kids' film produced by Danny DeVito, due out this summer.

Reubens: Smiling (and working) again

I know that New York Mafia don John Gotti is in prison. What are the conditions of his incarceration?—Bill M., Raritan, N.J.

A John Gotti, 54, has been held at the maximum-security federal penitentiary in Marion, Ill., since 1992, when he was sentenced to life in prison without parole for racketeering and murder. Last month, it was reported that Gotti was in "virtual solitary confinement" and battling to maintain control of the Gambino crime family, whose acting boss is his son, John Jr. PARADE has learned, however, that Gotti was only in "solitary" for his first two days, when he

Gotti: Still top dog?

The Clintons may have come off well in Personality Parade, but their critics have not. A 1994 item described Rush Limbaugh as not "much of an original thinker" who "knows how to deliver his dark vision of America's future in a humorous and folksy way." Limbaugh's popularity, the column said, could be attributed "to an ability to tap into people's deep-seated fears of women, minorities and cultural change." Other critics of the administration were described as mean, stingy, and closed-minded, if not actually part of "arch-conservative blocs like the Christian Coalition." In 1994 alone, the column threw mud on Newt Gingrich for leaving his first wife, Neil Bush (son of George) for his "ethical lapses" in the banking industry, and Marilyn and Dan Quayle's parents for being part of the "extreme right-wing." William F. Buckley, Jr. fared especially poorly. "As a child, little Bill was considered somewhat obnoxious by his older brothers and sisters, and he had few friends," confided a June 1994 column.

Acting as a champion for liberal causes is nothing new for Personality Parade. If anything, under former editor Lloyd Shearer, who wrote under the name Walter Scott for more than three decades, the column was even more political. During the early 1970s, Personality Parade often assumed an openly partisan tone, attacking Richard Nixon nearly every week. In just three weeks in January 1974, for instance, readers learned, among other things, that Gerald Ford was "mediocre," that "Nixon knows that he's a poor judge of personnel," and that John Mitchell and Bob Haldeman were "two basically angry, abrasive, suspicious and unfriendly men."

The tone of the column cooled during the Reagan years, but the gist remained the same. Shearer specialized in using the questions themselves to make his editorial point. Hence, a May 1986 item from "K.L." in McLean, Va., asked, "Who is the member of the Reagan Cabinet referred to as 'Fathead'? And which of the Washington lobbyists with great access to the White House is known as 'The Raging Queen'?" Shearer didn't answer that question. He didn't need to. The question itself did the trick.

When Shearer did answer the questions, his position was clear as ever. Reagan's decision to attack Libya, he wrote shortly after the bombing began, "will probably lead to increased retaliatory terrorism." Asked how Reagan would be remembered, were he to die, Shearer replied that "history would record him as the oldest man, as well as the first divorcé and first film star, ever elected president." As for the president's children, the "Reagan offspring have capitalized on their family name or relationship."

Shearer reached his lowest—or perhaps least guarded—point in the spring of 1990, when he answered a question about Fidel Castro in the following way: "On the whole he is liked and respected in Cuba. If a national election were held there today, he no doubt would win, even if opposition were allowed." The reason? Fidel, said Shearer, is "admired by Hispanics,

albeit grudgingly in some cases, as the only Latin American *jefe* (chief) to have defeated a U.S.-backed invasion of his country."

Answers like these didn't do much for *Parade*'s reputation as a light-hearted family magazine, and in 1991 Shearer, then in his late 70s, relinquished the column (though not his affiliation with the magazine). He was replaced by Edward Klein, a respected former *Newsweek* editor who at one time ran the *New York Times Magazine*. Klein is by all accounts not terribly ideological, more interested in celebrities than politicians. Yet the column spins on unabated.

One of the more fascinating aspects of Personality Parade is its apparent omniscience. The column seems able to discern the deepest desires and motives of the people it writes about, especially politicians. Editor Walter Anderson describes the "voice" of the column as "that wonderful guest, that entertaining guest you'd love to have in your room that's really a very wise and sophisticated person that seems to know everything that's going on. You've met people like this—the life of the party, the person who really knows what's going on." And how does Personality Parade know what's really going on? "Consider how many contacts we have in the White House itself and in the administration," replies Anderson. "We have direct access."

Yes, Personality Parade does have that. Or at least Lloyd Shearer does. Shearer has himself spawned a small army of Clinton administration contacts. One of his sons, Derek Shearer, worked as both an economic adviser to the Clinton campaign and as deputy undersecretary of commerce in the administration. (Derek was later nominated to be ambassador to Finland, but was stopped in the Senate by Republicans wary of his leftist politics.) Lloyd's daughter Brooke Shearer currently is head of the White House Fellows program. And Shearer's son-in-law, Strobe Talbott, who at one time wrote several articles for *Parade* under the pseudonym Clyde Carmichael, is Number Two at the State Department.

Contacts like these help explain items like the one that ran in the January 23, 1994, issue of *Parade*. In a rare swipe at a Clinton administration official, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was described in the column as having "plenty" of critics, both in the White House and elsewhere. Still, readers should not fear for the future of America's foreign policy, assured Personality Parade: "The recent appointment of longtime Clinton pal Strobe Talbott as the No. 2 man in the State Department positions him to take over if Christopher should falter."

THE KNOW-IT-ALL TONE OF THE COLUMN HAS CAUSED MORE THAN A FEW TO WONDER WHERE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS IT PRINTS COME FROM. COULD THEY BE REAL?

The more literate may (and do) dismiss the influence of *Parade*. It is, after all, an insert known for its fluffy, marginally relevant features on topics like "The Cast of *Baywatch*: Do You Really Know Them?" Yet it is hard to dismiss the influence Personality Parade has on the attitudes of the electorate, if only because so many people read it. As Walter Anderson humbly explains, Personality Parade is "recognized as the best-read thing in print in the English language other than the Bible." And Anderson may be right. Actual studies of the subject are hard to find, but there does seem to be a consensus in the newspaper business that, after Page One and particularly interesting news stories, Personality Parade is the first thing people turn to in the Sunday paper. The column certainly draws an enthusiastic response. Personality Parade gets an average of about 50,000 letters a year, some of them from hard-core devotees like Julian Hammer, an employee of a men's clothing store in Carteret, N.J., who says he writes the column every day, or "whenever I have something to tell them."

Personality Parade's know-it-all tone and apparent influence have caused more than a few to wonder where some of the questions it prints come from. Some just seem too perfect, too well-timed to coordinate with current or breaking news events. A lot of them, frankly, look like set-ups. Could they all be real? "Absolutely," says Anderson. "Every question is legitimate, it's from a real reader. Sometimes they're edited down. But what really matters is the essential question. And every single question is a legitimate question."

It is hard to check Anderson's claim with the letter-writers themselves, since a remarkably large number of them—the majority of a random sample—are impossible to track down, simply not listed by the phone company. But of those who do have telephones, more than one disputes Anderson's characterization of how the magazine's letters are edited.

The February 20, 1994, Personality Parade, for example, contains a letter from one "M.L. Singer" in Kenwood, Calif. Singer asks: "How much truth is there to the story that Hillary Rodham Clinton is wildly jealous of Vice President

Gore's wife, Tipper, and has purposely kept her in the shadows?" "There is absolutely no truth to that rumor," replies Personality Parade, before going on to describe the "genuinely fond" relationship the two women have.

Reached at his home, Mervin Singer—who describes himself as "the only M.L. Singer in Kenwood"—sounds baffled as he remembers reading the letter he ostensibly wrote to Personality Parade. Singer says he never asked about jealousy between the first and second ladies. He simply wanted to know where Mrs. Gore got the nickname "Tipper." But when the letter appeared in *Parade*, "It came out with this thing about jealousy and all this kind of stuff. It really wasn't my original question, but I guess he [the editor] made up his own question." Meanwhile, Singer's letter had been transformed by Personality Parade into a handy p.r. vehicle for the Clinton White House.

Something similar happened to Walter Gaskins. In late-1993, the Phoenix businessman sent Personality Parade a stinging letter about Bill Clinton. Gaskins, who grew up in Arkansas and describes himself as a longtime critic of the former governor, wanted to know how, in a democracy, Clinton could have been elected president when fewer than 50 percent of Americans had voted for him. On February 13, 1994, Personality Parade printed Gaskins's letter. Only it wasn't the same letter. "President Clinton was elected with 43 percent of the popular vote, but he obviously got a majority in the Electoral College," the new version began. "Has a candidate ever won a plurality of the popular vote but actually lost in the Electoral College?"

Gaskins says he was "shocked" when he opened the Sunday paper to find that his criticism of President Clinton had been turned into a history lesson. "It was totally skewed," Gaskins remembers, "the exact opposite of what I had written." More than that, it was embarrassing: "All my family lives back in Arkansas, and they asked me, 'Why did you write that?' and I said 'Well, I didn't write that.' After that, I stopped reading *Parade*." Irritated, Gaskins wrote another letter to *Parade* asking why the meaning of his letter had been altered. He never heard back. "So I wrote in to that lady with the highest IQ in the world"—that's Marilyn vos Savant, whose column of brainteasers appears weekly in *Parade*—"and I said, 'You're obviously a pretty sharp lady, why would you all do this?' But I didn't get a response." ♦

Ideas

The Color of Science

By Claudia Winkler

An evolutionary biologist and a black man, Joseph Graves took pleasure in the coincidence: His symposium "Pseudoscience, Biology, and the Education of African American Students" was held on February 12, the birthday of both Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln.

Science and race are Graves's preoccupations, when he isn't teaching at Arizona State University West or pursuing his research into aging in five species of fruit fly. Scientists, he says, are taught to observe, and if they have eyes to see, they cannot fail to notice that the condition of African Americans is deteriorating. A stint as a teacher in Detroit's public schools in the late 1980s drove the point home.

Inadequate supplies and rundown facilities were no surprise. But Graves was dismayed by the scientific illiteracy of his students and by what he called "the prevalence of non-scientific ideas among the teachers across the board, not just African Americans." The fashionable solution—an Afrocentric science curriculum—he concluded would make the problem worse. For in the name of building black children's self-esteem, this curriculum mangled the very definition of science and brought into the classroom "incorrect methods for addressing the natural world."

Graves went back to graduate school. He started his work on flies at the University of California at Irvine, but he also publicly took on "scientific racism" in several of its guises. He debunked "melanism," the bogus theory that black people, allegedly including ancient Egyptians, have superior mental, physical, and paranormal powers because they have more melanin in their skin and their brains than whites. And he both critiqued what he regards as the spurious genetics in Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve* and denounced pseudoscientific arguments offered on radio call-in shows to prove *The Bell Curve* a slander against African Americans.

In 1995, Graves secured a $20,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to produce a collection of essays with the same title as his symposium, which took place at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Baltimore. The symposium presented a sampling of the work to appear in the book,

which is due out later this year.

The co-editor of the volume and co-chairman of the symposium was Bernard Ortiz de Montellano, from Wayne State University in Detroit. Born in Mexico, Ortiz de Montellano began his career with a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Texas, then moved into anthropology, writing a book on medicine and diet among the Aztecs. On the side, as a member of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos in Science, he developed an interest in providing "culturally relevant" teaching materials for Mexican American children.

His idea, he explained at the symposium, is not that there is one science for whites, another for minorities; merely that in teaching, it is essential to spark a child's curiosity and that including in the curriculum examples drawn from the child's distinctive heritage can help to do this. Given the anti-academic environment in which many minority students find themselves, teachers must powerfully fire children's interest to persuade them to persevere through the four years of high-school math and science they will need to study science in college.

As Ortiz de Montellano worked on teaching materials for Mexican American students, he kept expecting someone to do the same for blacks. Finally someone did—disastrously. In 1987 the Portland, Oregon, public schools published the pioneering "Baseline Essays in Afrocentric Education," intended as guidance to grade-school teachers. The Baseline Essays proved highly influential and have been adopted, formally or informally, Ortiz de Montellano says, by hundreds of school systems across the country, including those in Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, Ft. Lauderdale, and D.C. The trouble is, the essays are polluted with a wild disregard for truth.

The eye-popping mendacity of the Baseline Essay on science (revised in 1990) begins with the misidentification of its author. Hunter Havelin Adams, III is called a "research scientist of Argonne National Laboratories, Chicago"; in fact, he was a technician (he is now, reportedly, a medical student). The essay goes on to deconstruct the concept of science, emphasizing that all knowledge is culturally determined and objectivity is unachievable. "All people are scientists," it teaches, with the implication that one person's science is as good as any other's. African science—basically, that of the ancient Egyptians—is based on a "science paradigm" that is "antithetical to contemporary Western ones," which are guided by "nonethical considerations such as cost effectiveness."

Peter Steiner

Unlike the science of dead white European males, Egyptian science makes room for both "material and transmaterial cause and effect" and investigates "psychoenergetics," including "precognition, psychokinesis, and remote viewing," better known as ESP.

"Africans understood the multidimensionality of the mind: logical/rational, intuitive/symbolic, and emotional/spiritual," the Baseline Essay says. Indeed, much of the Egyptians' "science" is hard to distinguish from religion—which makes it a fascinating study for mature historians and philosophers of science, Ortiz de Montellano points out, but a confusing part of the grade-school science curriculum.

Adams's essay is filled with interesting information about the Egyptians' remarkable achievements—their calendars and dams, their architectural feats, their skill at embalming. But along the way it tosses off without evidence such whoppers as the claim that the Egyptians invented the glider and "used their early planes for travel, expeditions, and recreation!"; that 500 years ago the Dogon people of Mali, using no instruments, discovered the star known as Sirius B, imperceptible to the naked (Western) eye; and that,

in conclusion, "African people" are "the wellspring of creativity and knowledge on which the foundation of all science, technology and engineering rests."

Such inflated claims can only harm children by offering them "an illusory moment of self-esteem," Ortiz de Montellano asserts. He pleads for a simple educational ethic of self-respect earned by hard work, honest assessment, and genuine achievement. By all means, he says, use culturally relevant teaching materials whenever possible. But let children be taught to distinguish science from the supernatural. Let them learn to ask for evidence; to propose a hypothesis and test it; to observe with care.

By stirring the indignation of men like Graves and Ortiz de Montellano, the excesses of the Afrocentric education movement may have sown its destruction. One wonders, though, why more voices are not raised.

Ortiz de Montellano has tried for years to persuade the American Association for the Advancement of Science to speak out against pseudoscience for African Americans. But though it was willing enough a few years back to condemn the teaching of creationism as science, the association's board has been silent on melanism and the Baseline Essays. One fears the gentle scholars may be squeamish—for surely they do not believe that mental ghettos are good enough for minority children. ♦

Books

Enemy of Excellence

By Christopher Caldwell

In his 1991 *Autobiography*, Kingsley Amis recalled "a small group of posh chaps," the literary critics who exercised undue sway over London writers of the 1950s: "They were second-generation Bloomsburyites, I suppose, junior and dilute modernists . . . men of small original output and uncertain taste, owing their position to other things than knowledge or merit. Connolly, the best known, seemed to me the least deserving."

> WHATEVER CAN BE SAID OF HIS MERITS AS A CRITIC AND WRITER, CYRIL CONNOLLY'S INFLUENCE WAS UNDENIABLE.

Nor were others much fonder of Cyril Connolly. Within five days of their wedding, his second wife Barbara Skelton felt "very restive and dissatisfied, saddled with a slothful whale of a husband who spends his time soaking in the bath and then . . . studies the racing form." This was a man who stole his friends' books and was given to moaning about those of his dead friends who didn't bequeath him any of their money or real estate. The London wit Molly MacCarthy described him as "mean with his own money and perpetually extravagant with everyone else's."

Connolly does have his defenders—his new biographer Clive Fisher, for one, whose *Cyril Connolly: The Life and Times of England's Most Controversial Literary Critic* (St. Martin's, 466 pages, $27.95) is the first full-scale account of his life. Kenneth Tynan once wrote of Connolly, "It is hard to explain his influence to anyone who has not felt the impact of his personality." Such appraisals are often the sign of a reputation unduly inflated—but they point to the reasons he is still an interesting figure: Whatever can be said of his merits, Connolly's *influence* was undeniable, and it was exercised at the very heart of English letters.

Connolly attended boarding school with George Orwell—who at age 12 told Connolly, with a lugubriousness beyond his years, "Of course, you realize, Connolly, that whoever wins this [First World] war we shall emerge a second-rate nation." He went through Oxford with Evelyn Waugh (where the two shared a crush on the same male friend), and adventured widely in sex, drink, and books—least widely in books, for Fisher tells us he gained only "scant acquaintance with Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Keats, Hardy or Dickens." Most decisive was Connolly's early job as amanuensis to the cranky American epigrammatist Logan Pearsall Smith, decisive because it is as a crafter of epigrams that Connolly is best remembered. To Connolly we owe "The reward of art is not fame or success but intoxication: that is why so many bad artists are unable to give it up." And: "Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first call promising." And, most famously, "Imprisoned in every fat man a thin one is wildly signalling to be let out."

In 1939, Connolly founded *Horizon* with the dissolute millionaire Peter Watson; it was for more than a decade the most important literary magazine in the English-speaking world. Here Connolly discovered such young writers as Angus Wilson and Julian Maclaren-Ross. Even if posterity has treated his

discoveries as indifferent talents, no one in those days excelled Connolly's reputation as a literary sage. Ezra Pound called him the only person he would trust to make a selection of his poems. By the time Connolly died in 1974, one magazine editor could say he symbolized the "very notion of literature."

These are charitable estimates of one who, for all his gifts as a wit and impresario, never, strictly speaking, wrote a book. His 1936 comic novel *The Rock Pool*, with its inch-wide margins and its 160 words per page, is better thought of as a padded vignette. Then there is *Enemies of Promise*, three longish essays in search of a cohesive premise, the closest thing to one being the insight that modernist writers can be divided into those who use big words ("Mandarin") and those who do not ("Vernacular"). Of *The Unquiet Grave*, the collection of French and English quotations and diary extracts that Connolly pompously called a "word-cycle" and published under the name "Palinurus," one can do little better than note that Connolly himself feared it would be read as "a collection of extracts chosen with 'outremer' snobbery and masquerading as a book."

That snobbery was a source of the moral obtuseness that certain of his contemporaries (and such astute later critics as Samuel Hynes) saw in his work. He was so insulated that even World War II failed to make an impression on him—unlike Waugh, for example, who saw the war as a test of character and opined that its importance to literary men was obvious, as one of its hidden values "would be to show us finally that we were not men of action." Connolly, to put it kindly, was always fighting the *last* war. *The Rock Pool* is a novel of the gay twenties written ten years after Waugh's *Vile Bodies* and seven years into a global depression, by which time Britain's literary set were all Marxists. Connolly caught up with literary Marxism only in the late 1930s, when its chief British practitioners, W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, were already on their way to (respectively) Christianity and Buddhism.

Cyril Connolly

Chas Fagan

Orwell, the very image of the engaged intellectual, was deeply offended by *The Rock Pool*, which in 1936 complains about the plight of European Jewry—but only *in Biblical times*—and dwells on dancing and drinking on the Riviera at the very moment when the Riviera was being overrun by hungry refugees from the Spanish Civil War. The book, Orwell said, was dated before it was published: "The awful thraldom of money is upon everyone, and there are only three immediately obvious escapes. One is religion, another is unending work, the third is the kind of sluttish antinomianism—lying in bed till four in the afternoon, drinking Pernod—that Mr. Connolly seems to admire." Connolly would come to agree, but only once the war was over, writing, in a 1946 postscript to the book: "Nothing 'dates' us so much as an ignorance of the horrors in store."

If all Connolly could be accused of was laggardness in the fight against fascism, criticism of his criticism would be misdirected. But the problem was more general. At a certain level, Connolly didn't believe in *anything*, and he lacked the courage of his lack of convictions. Reading him is not to follow a big spirit on a long moral journey, but to spend an afternoon in the front room with a chatty companion. Connolly liked it that way: As a novel reviewer, he generally chose second-rate novels by first-time writers. "It would have been a simple matter for him to review more significant work," writes Fisher, "to chart the progress of peers and contemporaries like [Graham] Greene, [Henry] Green, [Anthony] Powell or [Peter] Quennell. [But] Connolly was happy confining himself to the trite and

irredeemable because he saw that restriction as giving him the license to be flippant and extravagant." Nonetheless, Fisher tells us, "his comments about writers who had become established were incisive." Not very deep praise.

It's hardly surprising that Connolly was given to venting that most insincere of literary boasts: that he was "grateful" (particularly after Waugh published *Decline and Fall* at age 24) not to have had a big early success that would have hardened him into a caricature of himself. Insincere because *without* an early success, he panicked. Almost immediately, he behaved as if time were running out on him. He began taking up the momentary enthusiasms of his younger contemporaries, casting madly about for the latest school to which he could belong as an exemplar. This is clearly what Waugh meant when he derided *Enemies of Promise*: "Mr. Connolly sees recent literary history, not in terms of various people employing and exploring their talents, but as a series of 'movements,' sappings, bombings and encirclements, of party racketeering and jerrymandering [*sic*]."

To describe Connolly as "reactive rather than creative," as Fisher does, is almost too generous: Connolly was *imitative*. It is, not surprisingly, his parodies that, among his non-epigrammatic work, retain the best claim on our attention. (He did a hilarious job on Aldous Huxley called "Told in Gath.") If there is next to nothing about Connolly's actual criticism in Fisher's account, it is because, however felicitous the writing and however quick the wit, it does not today hold up as original thinking. There is a swim-with-the-tide aspect to it, an element of the joiner, as Connolly constantly pronounces on the death of literature but never meets a living modernist he doesn't like. Typical of his timing was his famous reconsideration of A.E. Housman in the pages of the *New Statesman*—as soon as the poet was safely dead. His rare attacks on contemporaries were confined either to those on whose puppy-doggish loyalty he could bank, like Spender, or those who were too aloof to care, like Waugh (who wrote, after one effort, "I thought your review of *Men at Arms* excellent. It is a pity you called 'Apthorpe' 'Atwater' throughout . . . because it will make your readers think you did not give full attention to the book"). Connolly was capable of applauding Eliot for revolutionizing modern poetry, then applauding William Carlos Williams for his sentiment that Eliot had *ruined* modern poetry. Never out of a changed mind or out of reconsideration, but seemingly out of sheer complaisance.

> CONNOLLY DID NOT BELIEVE IN *ANYTHING*; AND HE LACKED THE COURAGE OF HIS LACK OF CONVICTIONS.

As Hemingway wrote to Connolly, "Cyril, we were born into almost the worst fucking time there has ever been. And yet we have had almost as much fun as anyone ever had." A problem for both of them. There remains a significance to Connolly, although not as a critic. Better to restore him to the image he had of himself: part-wit, part-aphorist, but chiefly a signpost of failure to writers who would come after. What the Oxford don Maurice Bowra said of Connolly as an undergraduate could be said to the end of his life: "This is Connolly. Coming man. Hasn't come yet." ♦

GOODNIGHT STARR

In a tiny White House nook
There was lots of stuff
That could get mistook
Like some silly old billing rec—

Oops! forget about that
Think instead of the calico cat
That ginger dog or a pekinese
Their brains befogged by legalese

Or imagine cookies piping hot
And other things that really were not
Picture Susan Thomases truly miffed
The Senate committee getting stiffed

A comb and a brush and a mouthful of mush
A First Lady in pink whispering "hush"
A prim and proper president's house —
Anything but grilling the congenital spouse

Goodnight comb and goodnight brush
Goodnight to all the lawyerly mush
Goodnight cat and goodnight dog
Goodnight Senator Al (you chauvinist hog)

Goodnight Socks
Goodnight freebie stocks
Adieu David Hale
Sayonara Billy Dale

Goodnight Starr, go to sleep
You partisan Republican creep
Your nosy badgering just isn't fair
Out damn fusspots everywhere.